


*Thou see'st not whome thou see'st: then doe not say*
*That this is HEE who calls a lumpe of clay*
*Without it's soule a man: thou see'st nee more,*
*Nay, but the SHADOW of that lumpe. What store*
*Of gifts and graces, what perfections rare,*
*Among ten thousand persons scatt'red are;*
*Gather in one, Imagine it to bee*
*This SHADOWES Substance and then say 'tis HEE. VT*

GG. scat




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# *The Divine Authority*
## OF THE
# SCRIPTVRES
## ASSERTED,
### *OR THE*
### Great Charter of the worlds Bleſſednes vindicated.

BEING

A Diſcourſe of Soveraigne uſe and ſervice in theſe times; not only againſt that King of Errours, and Hereſies Anti-ſcripturiſme, who hath already deſtroyed the faith of many, and hath all the faith in the World yet remaining, in chaſe, but alſo againſt all ſuch inward ſuggeſtions and ſecret underminings of Satan, by which he privily attempteth the ruine of the precious faith and hope, wherewith the Saints have built up themſelves with much ſpirituall Induſtry and Care.

Together with two tables annexed; the former, of the contents, and ſeverall arguments more largely profecuted in the Treatiſe; the later, of ſuch texts of Scripture unto which ſome light is given therein.

By JOHN GOODVVIN a ſervant unto God and men in the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

*But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world, hath blinded the eyes of them who beleeve not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them,* 2 Cor 4 34.
*O ye fooliſh Galatians who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Ieſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth, crucified amongſt you?* Gal. 3. 1.

Illis, qui divinas ſcrutantur Scripturas, nihil poteſt illudere. *Theophilect.*

In quibuſcunque eorum (ſc. aliorum Scriptorum) invenitur eadem veritas, longe tamen eſt impar authoritas. *Aug.*

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

# TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE The LORDS and COMMONS assembled in PARLIAMENT.

Right Honourable;

IT *is a memorable ſaying of an ancient Heathen*; He is the braveſt man, that knowes beſt how to be injured [a]. *The lighteſt working of the Spirit towards a revenge, though upon the ſharpeſt provocation, being diſcovered, ſuffereth not a man to be ſeen in his glory. In the mean time it is a crown of glory upon the head of men in place, and of Divine parallell, to ſuffer ſuch men to be leaſt injured, who beſt know how to ſuffer; that is, to ſuffer alone, and without the leaſt damage, or danger, of any other man. The* Anointed *ones of God, eſpecially his Prophets, know how to ſuffer far above the rate, either of the wiſdome or patience, of other men: and yet, of all others theſe muſt not be touch'd, or put to ſuffer:* Touch not mine Anointed, and doe my Prophets no harm [b].

[a] Οὗτος κράτιστός ἐστι ἀνὴρ ὃς γνῷ ἀδικεῖσθαι, ὅστις ἀδικεῖται πλὴν ὀφθῆναι θέλων. Menander.

[b] Pſal 105. 15.

*This my moſt humble addreſſe unto you, rejoyceth in this; that it is altogether ignorant, at leaſt in point of affection, of any wrong done to the Authour: and yet preſenteth you with an opportunity of being ſeen in the beſt of your glory. For upon a late conjunction of the Providence of God, with the improvidence of men, there hath iſſued from the Pulpit (as I hear from many hands) an undue repreſentation of me and my pen, into your ears, and that upon the day of your late ſolemn humiliation for the prevailing of Hereſies and Blaſphemies in the Land, (beſides what of this ill air I have cauſe in abundance to ſuſpect, hath been breathed upon many of you at other times.)*

*To me (I ſpeak the Truth, and lie not to your Honours) it is more eaſie to ſuffer, then complain: and had not my deſire to make all*

*your apprehensions (with other mens) thoughts of Honour and Truth, as farre as lieth in me, been stronger, then either of any reparations for my self, or of any disparaging reflection upon the offendours, I had not lift up so much as a thought towards this* Apologie, *or* explication *rather of my self. Yea so tender am I of the reputations of those who have* mistaken *me (to qualifie an hard action with a soft expression) that I am scarce free in my self to desire of your Honours so much as a perusall of the ersuing Explication, lest hereby they also may possibly suffer. Only herein (I must confesse)* sorrow fills *my* heart, *and I look upon the thing as little lesse then requiring another day of humiliation by way of atonement;* viz. *that in a day of so solemn a fast amongst professed Christians,* Barrabbas *should again be released, and* Christ *crucified; I mean, that many* Errours *and* heresies, *which really are such, and reign to the great damage and danger of the Truth, (yea and some of them to the disturbance of the peace) amongst us, should be dissembled, and passed by; sound assertions, and harmlesse expressions being in the mean time spread and arraigned before God, and men, and your Honours particularly, as the great Incentives of the displeasure of God against the Nation, and so destructive to the peace and happinesse of it.*

*I am not conscious to my self of the least wrong I have ever done, either to man, woman, or childe, in Word or deed; nor of any refusall of subjection to any just Law or imposition of men: if either my memory, or conscience, herein deceiveth me, I here stand forth, and humbly offer my self before your Honours, and all the world, to make satisfaction with the best of my substance, or otherwise, as farre as I am, or ever shall be able, upon any reasonable evidence or conviction of the fact. If I have, either in any of my writings, or Sermons, or Discourses otherwise, uttered or asserted any thing erroneous and unsound; I here offer and submit my self in like manner, to sit at the feet of those, whom either of your Honourable Houses shall appoint to instruct me in the truth; being a thousand times more willing to* offer sacrifice to the Truth, then to be a servant to any supposition under Heaven [a]. *For I know that it is* Truth *which* sanctifieth [b], *whereas errour defileth* [c]. *Only I crave leave to make it my humble request unto you, that I may not be compelled to seek the living among the dead, Truth (I mean) amongst the presumptions, and infirm suppositions of men; but in the Scriptures, which are living, and where*

[a] Δεῖ μᾶλλον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ δοῦναι, ἢ δουλεῦσαι τῇ ὑποθέσει.

[b] Joh. 17. 17.

[c] Nec quis error turpitudine caret. *Aug.* Labi autem, errare, nescire decipi & turpe, & inhonestum ducimus: *Cic. Offic.*

*where others ſay they both ſeek, and finde it. Strong Concluſions coming forth into the World leaning upon weak premiſes, have in all ages bereav'd the world of the uſe and benefit of the one halfe (at leaſt) of that reaſon and underſtanding, which God with a liberall hand beſtowed upon it for its own advancement in happineſſe and peace.* I call God for a record upon my ſoul [d], *that I have not the leaſt touch of a deſire to* be wiſe (*in the things of God*) *either* above, *or beſides,* what is written [*in the book of God*] *nor have I the leaſt hope of riſing up in Wiſdom to the due height of what is* written *herein, whileſt the incumbrance of fleſh and bloud hangeth on me: only my deſires are, that in my conſcientious endeavours to aſcend this mountain, I may neither be thruſt down by thoſe that are above me, nor pull'd backward by thoſe that are beneath. It would be* (*I conceive*) an entrance in abundance *into a better world, if men generally could be content to poſſeſſe their ſouls in patience, when they meet with others either weaker, or wiſer, then themſelves.* Auguſtin *ſpeaking of the ſenſe of a difficult place of Scripture, ſaith thus:* It may ſeem one thing to me, and another to another: but neither doe I impoſe upon him what I ſhall ſay upon it, for the better ſence; nor he upon me [e]. Scultetus *alſo reports it for a ſaying much eſteemed by* Luther, *and which he profeſſeth that he firſt heard from* Judocus (*ſometimes his Maſter.*) Solis Canonicis libris deberi fidem; cæteris omnibus judicium. i. *that preſent belief is a debt due only to the Canonicall books of Scripture, but judgement or conſideration, to all others.*

*I make no queſtion but that your Honours know, that not only mens manners, but their Judgements and Doctrines alſo are apt in time, to warp, and to degenerate, unleſſe God ſhould ever and anon be ſtirring up ſome, who by dealing faithfully with them, ſhould neceſſitate them to a recollection and ſurvey of themſelves in both. When the Prieſts complain'd of* Luther *to the Emperour* Charles *the fift; he plainly told them,* that if they had been good, they ſhould have ſtood in no need of ſuch a Cenſor, or Corrector of manners, as *Luther* was [f]. *And it was the ingenious confeſſion of an* Abbot *living in theſe times, that if Luther* had not come amongſt them, they ſhould have perſwaded the people to have fed upon hey [g]. *I wiſh the obſervation taken up long ſince by* Minutius Felix, *received not ſo large a teſtimony as it doth, from our preſent times:*

d 2 Cor. 1. 23.

e Poteſt mihi aliquid videri, alteri aliud. Sed neq; ego quod dixero, præſcribo alteri ad meliorem intellectum, neq; ille mihi. *Aug in Enar.* Pſal. 36.

f Vita Religioſorum ita tætebat ad vulgus, ut *Carolus* V. Imperator, Eccleſiaſticis de *Luthero* conquerentibus in Comitijs *Auguſtanis* reſponderit: Si vos ſacrificuli pij eſſetis, non indiguiſſetis Cenſore, & morum Correctore Luthero. *Scultet. Annal Dec.* 1. p. 15.

g Jam ſuperſtitionibus ita erant omnia oppleta, ut celebris Monaſterij Neuhuſani in Vangionibus Abbas dixerit (vera narro) Si *Lutherus* non venſſet, ſe perſuaſuros fuiſſe

populo, ut fœno latrantem stomachum placassent. *Ibid.*

Many (*saith he*) out of a loathnesse to weary themselves in seeking out the Truth, turn in to the errours next at hand. *For my self, my love is such to the precious souls of men, that I cannot knowingly suffer any suspicious Doctrine, or loose opinion in the things of God, to* passe *thorow the world neer unto me, unexamined, especially when any considerable numbers of men are like to suffer: which, though it be a thankless ingagement, and very obnoxious to those, who love either ease, or honour, more then cleanness of judgement, and pureness of minde and understanding; yet is it a proper and effectuall course to preserve the Doctrine of the Gospel, if not absolutely free from all, yet from that intermixture of errour, which commonly issueth from between the feet of a supine incogitancy and sloth in those, who are intrusted with the ministry of it.*

[g] Multi tædio investigandæ veritatis, ad proximos divertunt errores. *Min. Felix.*

*But I reverence the Great concernments of the Kingdom in your hands: wherein, as from the beginning I have served you with all faithfullnesse and simplicity of heart hitherto, so am I unwilling now to make my self a Trespasser, so much as by an impertinent diversion of your Honours from your attendance thereon. The great and blessed God, whose is the Kingdom, power, and glory, fill your Assemblies from day to day with the presence of his glory; by keeping your judgements in a due distance of precedencie to your affections; and both judgements and affections in a due proximitie and neernesse to himself, that so the whole Nation may yet rise up before you as one man, and call you blessed and your Name be,* The repairers of the great breach, and the restorers of paths to dwell in [h], *thorough many generations. Such is the prayer of*

[h] Isa. 58. 12.

*Your Honours most humbly and*

Martij 26. 1647.

*really devoted to serve you,*

*in your Interests in both worlds,*

JOHN GOODVVIN.

TO MY

# BELOVED FLOCK,

## The Sons and Daughters of GOD,

### who first gave up themselves unto the Lord, and then unto Us by the will of GOD.

Dear Christian Brethren,

THE daies of mine abiding with you in the flesh, neither you, nor my self can expect should be many. The Law of mortality established in Heaven, and daily put in vigorous execution on Earth, cutteth off this hope and expectance, both from you and me. But the comfort is, the hole of this pit is not onely levelled and fill'd up, but a mount also raised upon it, by *the Law of life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* If our forlorn of ministeriall accommodations be scattered and defeated, by the hand of death, or otherwise, our reserve in Heaven will advance, and bring us off from the world with honour and peace howsoever. The great and precious pro-



mises

miſes of life and ſalvation unto thoſe who beleeve, for the making good whereof Jeſus Chriſt himſelf with all his glory, are given in pawn and pledge unto the world, are not ſuſpended upon the preſence of a mortall man, one or other, but glory in the truth, faithfullneſſe, and power, of him who hath made them, and are ready to ſwallow up into victory, whatſoever ſhall threaten, or oppoſe their performance.

Not withſtanding, as the great Apoſtle, though (as he ſaith) he knew how to be hungry, as well as to be full, and to ſuffer want as well as to abound, yet acknowledged to his *Philippians*, that *they had done well in communicating with his affliction*[a]. In like manner however the great and glorious God, knows as well how to want, as to abound, in reſpect of miniſteriall diſpenſations, and is able without his *earthen veſſels*, to convey his *veſſels of honour*, into their bleſſedneſſe and glory, yet there is little queſtion to be made, but that he graciouſly accepteth the diligent and faithfull ſervice even of theſe his *earthen veſſels*, in making one ſhoulder with him to advance and carry on this great and bleſſed deſign. And for you though I am upon grounds of ſoberneſſe and truth abundantly confident (at leaſt of many of you) that your anointing is ſuch, that you ſtand in as little need of any mans teaching[b], as any other people, yet I know alſo, that no people whatſoever will more thankfully reliſh and accept of the labour and travell of any mans ſoul, either for their edification, or eſtabliſhment, then you.

[a] Phil. 4. 12, 14.

[b] 1 Joh. 2. 27.

Upon theſe two conſiderations in conjunction with the great and longing deſire of my ſoul, that your whole ſpirit and ſoul, and body, *may be preſerved blameleſſe*,

*leſſe, unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*[c]. I ſhall endeavour, whilſt I yet remain with you, to prevent as much as may be, any ſuppoſed or feared inexpediency in my departure from you. And this (I judge) I ſhall attempt upon the beſt terms of likelyhood of ſucceſſe, by ſeeking to leave as much of my ſpirit with you, as I know how, when my bodily preſence ſhall be diſpoſed of otherwiſe. In order hereunto, not knowing how near the laying aſide of this earthly tabernacle may be at hand, I have thought it meet not only to leave the enſuing treatiſe, for your peruſall after that generall manner, wherein it is left for other men, but to incorporate with it, the expreſſe mention, and that dear remembrance of you, which I have in my ſoul; that ſo in one and the ſame monument, the whole and intire ſpirit of your Paſtor, as well for morals, as intellectuals, may be preſerved for your converſe, and to make company for your mindes and ſpirits, when you pleaſe.

[c] 1 Thes. 5. 23

You are my preſent joy; and will be (I hope) my future crown: for neither hath your faith hitherto, through any bewitchings of the fleſh, preſumed to aſcend into Heaven, to bring down ſome other *Jeſus*, beſides him whom *Paul* preached, nor have you ſuffered *your mindes to be corrupted from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel*: nor your ſelves to be baptized into any other ſpirit, then that which ſpeaketh ῥητῶς, *i.* expreſly in the Scriptures. You have neither preſumed to be wiſe above, nor yet been ſatiſfied to be ignorant beneath, what is written. Whilſt many profeſſours have compaſſed themſelves with ſparks of their own kindling, you have warmed your hearts with faith and love at that fire, which Jeſus

[a] Luk. 12. 49.

Chriſt himſelf came from Heaven to kindle on the earth [a], and ſo have kept your ſelves out of the dint of the ſore judgement of God, which the Scripture calls *a delivering up unto an injudicious minde.*

Thus I recommend you to God, and to that word of his grace which he ſpeaketh in the Scriptures, both unto you, and to the world, and which is able (ſo you pervert it not with myſticall and forged interpretations, thus making it to become your own, in ſtead of his) *to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them which are ſanctified*, and implore with all humble and unfained ardency of ſoul, that *great Shepheard of the Sheep*, ſo to proſper you in the hand of that poor under-Shepheard whom he hath ſet over you, that you may be found of him at the great day.

Yours according to all Paſtorall

From my Study in *Coleman* ſtreet, *Dec.* 9. 1647.

affections and engagements in the Lord,

*John Goodwin.*

## *To the Reader.*

GOod Reader, The obſervation cannot lightly but do good ſervice in theſe times; That as God hath his times to try the world, with his rare and unexpected mercies, ſo hath he his ſeaſons alſo, to make a further and different triall of it likewiſe, by his ſtrange and unexpected judgements. *Who would have ſaid unto Abraham* (ſaid *Sarah*, when time was) *that Sarah ſhould have given children ſuck? for I have born him a ſon in mine old age.*[a] *The Kings of the earth* (ſaid *Ieremy* at another time) *and all the inhabitants of the world would not have beleeved, that the adverſary and the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of Ieruſalem*[b]. When *England lay covered with the ſhadow of death*, with that profound ignorance of God, and of *Ieſus Chriſt*, which, under the reign of the Romiſh intereſt amongſt us, was little leſſe then faſt bound with the iron bands both of Church and ſtate laws and decrees, upon the faces of the mindes, underſtandings, and conſciences of the generality of the nation; who would *now have ſaid unto England, yet a little while, and life and immortality ſhall be brought to light in the midſt of thee? and thou ſhalt be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea* c. Notwithſtanding *the zeal of the Lord of Hoſts* for the good of this nation, did (as we all know) *perform it: the people which ſate in darkneſſe have ſeen a great light, and to them which ſate in the region and ſhadow of death, light is ſprung up* d

a Gen. 21. 7.

b Lam. 4. 12.

c Iſa. 11.

d Mat 4. 16.

This hath been the great and unexpected application of Heaven unto this nation, for the triall of it on the right hand. And on the other hand, when we were full, *when we were rich, when we reigned as Kings in the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt*, when we had *the powers of the world to come*, attending upon us daily, as a life-guard to our ſouls, who would have ſaid, that ever ſuch men ſhould be found in the midſt of us, who ſhould call the Sun, a ſackcloath, and ſay to the Oracles of God, you are deceivers: and to the Scriptures, prophecy no more your vain things unto us: for ye are *fables deviſed by men?* And yet we know that the righteous God hath ſaid unto the ſpirit of this moſt dreadfull abhomination, *goe forth* into the land, *prevail*, and *perſwade* many; yea it is ſomewhat more then to be feared, that the *cloud ariſing out of the ſea*, which is yet *little*, and but *like a mans hand*, will in a ſhort time cover the Heavens with blackneſſe. For how great is the generation amongſt us, who *deny* the divine authority of the Scriptures, *in their works*: and if in their works, then in their hearts alſo; And they who deny it in both theſe, want but a ſlender opportunity to deny it even with their lips. This is a ſtrange and unlook'd for judgement come upon the nation for the triall of it on the left hand: and let *Capernaum which hath been lifted up unto Heaven*, take heed, that ſhe be not

ſuddainly *brought down to hell.* For doubtleſſe God having thus tryed the nation, firſt on the one hand, and then on the other, will, upon the behaviour of it after both, ſoon determine, and know what to do with it.

That which hath been the ſnare of death to thoſe loſt men (if yet they be loſt) who have not only themſelves loſt the ſight of God in the Scriptures, but endeavour to perſwade all thoſe, who ſay they ſee God here, that they have loſt their ſenſes, and call *darkneſſe*, a *viſion*, is (doubtleſſe) this: they ſometimes pretended a ſound beliefe of the Divinity of the Scriptures, and *put forth their hand to the plough* of a *Chriſtian* profeſſion, but have *looked back*; and hereby are become εὐθέτου, *unmeet*, or illdiſpoſed *for the kingdome of God*[a], being ſet off at a further diſtance in their affections from God, and grown into a ſecret diſlike and diſtaſt of the waies of religion. And the conſciences of thoſe who diſtaſt the waies of holineſſe and religion, have no other Sanctuary to flee unto for ſecurity and peace, but an exauthorization of the Scriptures, or a deniall of their deſcent from God. A competent, yea or tolerable belief of their divinity, in conjunction with a like proportion of knowledge in them, muſt needs make an irreligious heart and life, burthens intolerable. So that men who ſuffer, either the wiſdome of the fleſh, or the pleaſures, or profits of the world, to diſengage their hearts from the love of religion, and waies of holineſſe, wherein ſometimes they walked, put the iron yoke of this ſad neceſſity upon their own necks, even to indulge and favour their conſciences to the uttermoſt they are able, or know how, with a ſuppoſall, that the words of the Scriptures, *are but winde*, and God only the pretended, not the naturall, or reall Authour, and Father of them. Now feeling this iron yoke we ſpeak of, ever and anon galling, and wringing, and paining them, for their eaſe, they are conſtrained to travail far and neer with their mindes, and underſtandings to enquire after, and gather up, all and all manner of grounds, reaſons, arguments, colours, intimations, inſinuations, pretences, how ſuperficiall, light, empty and unconcluding ſoever, which doe but ſhadow in the leaſt that divine luſtre of the Scriptures, and overture but ſo much as a poſſibility of their non-origination from God. And as *Solomon* takes notice (Prov. 27. 7.) that *to the hungry ſoul, every bitter thing is ſweet*; ſo when men are labouring and toiling under that ſad and hard engagement of proving the Sun to be a ſackcloth, and the Scriptures, not from God, the *ſhadows of the mountains ſeem* armed *men unto them*; *ſtubble and rotten wood, are turned into iron*, and ſteel unto them: yea that which is weak, and ſometimes that *which is not*, is *mighty in their* imaginations *to throw down* the foundations of the Scriptures, and to confound the ſtrong and mighty things of God.

Nor is it only that hard neceſſity, which lies upon theſe men, to make ſomething of every thing, yea and of nothing, for their purpoſe, that makes them ſo credulous, yea and confident in their way; the hand of heaven is ſtretched out againſt them, and *takes from them* even that naturall force or ſpirit of diſcerning (in reſpect of ſpirituall things) which ſometimes they had[b], delivering them up into *an injuditious minde*, *and*

[a] Luk. 9. 62.

[b] Mat. 25. 29.

[c] Εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν. Rom. 1. 28.

*ſending*

*ſending them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe lies.* d *He that is the true light, inlightens every man* ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον; i. *coming, or as he cometh, into the world* e; meaning, that *Chriſt* out of the treaſury of his grace and merit, furniſheth every man whatſoever, who liveth in the world to years of diſcretion, with a ſtock of light, reaſon, judgement, conſcience, memory, underſtanding. *&c.* whereby to make him capable of thoſe terms, of that great and bleſſed treaty, about the things of his eternall peace and wellbeing, wherein God addreſſeth himſelf unto the world. Now whileſt men move, and act according to the true ducture, and commonſtrations of this light, without any palpable or wilfull deviation, or habituall neglect of them, God (in the Scripture phraſe) *takes* a kinde of *pleaſure* in them, bleſſeth and increaſeth their ſtore, according to the import of what our Saviour promiſeth, and aſſerteth in the Goſpel: *viz. that unto every one that hath* (*i.* that by a regular courſe, and tenour of actions, declareth that he hath light given him by Chriſt: for a man in law, is then reputed to have a thing, when it ſome waies or other, appeareth, that he hath it) *ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance* a (*i.* by means of the bleſſing of God upon his regular and conſcientious walkings, the eye of his reaſon, judgement, and underſtanding, ſhall be more opened and cleered, and fortified from day to day) But when men ſhall turn their backs upon that *candle of the Lord* (as *Solomon* calls it) which by the hand of Chriſt is lighted up in every mans ſoul; eſpecially after the light and ſhining of it, have been augmented and enriched by the additionall light of the Goſpel; and ſhall follow the irregular and crooked dictates and leadings of their luſts and ſinfull propenſions; God now ordinarily doth not only ſuſpend the influence of his former bleſſing, by which thoſe ſoul-abilities we ſpake of, had flouriſhed and proſpered untill now; but alſo in proceſſe of his moſt juſt ſeverity and indignation, curſeth that tree of light within them, ſaying to it (as Chriſt to the *fig-tree*, finding no fruit on it) *never fruit grow on thee more.* Nor is this any thing, but what the Lord Chriſt informeth the world of before hand, in the words immediatly ſubjoyned to thoſe lately mentioned. *But from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath, i.* (according to the line of the interpretation given of the former words) when men ſhall ceaſe to give a reſonable account, or proof, of thoſe impreſſions of light and knowledge which Chriſt had planted in them, by waies and practiſes anſwerable to the nature and guidance of them, God uſually blaſteth them with the breath of his diſpleaſure; ſo that afterwards *the place* of the former abilities in theſe men in reference unto ſpirituall things, *is no where to be found*; nor ſhall any man, duely comparing the after ingagements and actings of their judgements about matters of Relgion, with the former, be able to ſay, Theſe are the men. This alſo is but that, which the Apoſtle expreſſeth in the name of God, *Heb.* 10.38. *But if he* (i. *the juſt man*, ſpoken of in the former part of the verſe, not any, or any man, as our tranſlatours give it us) *ſhall draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him* b, meaning, (according to the emphaſis and force of the expreſſion c) that his ſoul ſhall be highly diſpleaſed

d 2. Theſ. 2. 11.
e Ioh. 1. 9.

*Non eſſe, & non apparere, equiparantur in jure.*
a Mat. 25. 29.

b Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται· καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ.
c *Apud Hebræos, adverbia negandi contrarium ſignificant ejus verbi, cui adhibentur. vi.* Mede. Apocal. p. 172.

pleased with him: and that such a person must expect to receive from him in judgement accordingly Thus I have shewed thee (good reader) the dangerous and corrupt seed, of which the generation of Anti-scripturists amongst us, is immediatly begotten; a declining in religious affections and wayes.

Give me leave to search this soar neerer to the bottom, and (in a few lines more) shew thee, what is the onely, or at least, the predominant cause, of this declining in men. This I conceive to be, the imbracing of a dead, in stead of a living Faith, of the Divine Authority and heavenly Originall, of the Scriptures. It is the saying (as I remember) of *Quintilian*, that *many might in time have attained unto wisdome, had they not thought they had attained it already.* In like manner it may be truly said, that many might have attained a solid and sound belief of the Scriptures, and of their Relation unto God, had they not anticipated, the belief it self, with a loose supposition, or imagination of it. Now there had been no place in them for such a supposition or imagination as this, had not something in them like unto such a belief, prepared it. Similitude is a Great Deceiver in the world; and the same in colour, frequently intertained, for the same in substance. And to a solid and sound belief of the Scriptures, there is no semblance, but an ill-grounded and superficiall belief onely. Such a belief as this, though it be good for little, but to afford men an opportunity to dally and play fast and loose with God, and to turn hell and Heaven into a pastime, yet strange is the contentment of men and women, who sit under the shadow of it. A dead faith makes them beleeve they are alive, even whilst they are *dead in sins and trespasses*: yea sometimes it inticeth and draweth men on to so much sin and wickednesse, that God in an holy and just revenge takes even it also out of the hearts of men, and so leaves them faithlesse altogether. And let this be carefully remembred; that to be *faithlesse altogether* after a dead faith, is a condition a thousand times more hopelesse, then before it. God no where saith, If a man hath not *drawn neer* unto me, *my soul shall have no pleasure in him:* many times *his soul hath* so farre *pleasure* in such a man, as to bestow the unvaluable gift of a sound Faith and repentance on him. But what saith he? we have already heard it: *If the just man (any man,* say our Translatours) *shall draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

*Multi ad sapientiam pervenire potuissent, nisi se jam pervenisse putassent.*

We are not yet at the coar of the ulcer: the spring-head of the great Sin and misery proportionable, of our Anti-Scripturist, lieth yet lower in the ground. If there be a reason or cause assigneable of his dead Faith, this is like to be the root that beareth it. What the reason or cause is of a dead faith in any man, will easily be conceived, if the nature of this Faith be but taken a little into consideration, and understood. A dead Faith is not therefore so called (I mean, dead) onely becaus it acteth not, or bringeth forth no fruit, at all: there is no *Faith* at all, *dead* in such a sense: the Faith of *Judas, Simon Magus, Demas*, of the second, and third ground, *&c* brought forth fruit, and this like unto the fruit of a living Faith (as farre as men were able positively to judge of it) yea, probably, in as great plenty, as a living Faith it self is wont to bear. And yet the respective Faiths of all these,

were

were *dead*, in that ſenſe and ſignification of the word, *Dead*, wherein we now uſe it. Indeed the Apoſtle *Iames* concludeth that *Faith to be dead*, which is *without works*[a]: but he ſpeaketh emphatically, *viz.* of ſuch works, which are eſſentiall unto, and univerſally found to accompany a Faith, that is living: and doth not ſuppoſe a poſſibility of any *Faith* whatſoever, without works in one kinde or other, ſutable to it. Therefore by *a dead Faith*, I mean (with the Scripture) ſuch a Faith or credulity, which *Solomon* aſcribes to the *ſimple* or *fooliſh*, Prov. 14. 15 *The ſimple beleeveth every word*, viz. that he heareth, or that is ſpoken to him, without any act of dijudication between *word* and *word*, without any rationall and ſubſtantiall inquiry, whether there be any competent and ſufficient ground to judge that *word*, or ſaying, true, which *he beleeveth*. So by a *dead Faith*, the Scripture (doubtleſſe) meaneth ſuch a Faith or conſent unto ſupernaturall Truths, which is haſtily, and without due conſideration rais'd in the ſoul: and which is able to give no ſubſtantiall, rationall, or ſolid account of it ſelf, either to it ſelf, or unto others. Of this kinde, is that Faith, which is meerly built either 1. upon the credit, authority, or good opinion of our Teachers: or 2. upon ſome great and plauſible concurrence of the judgements of men ſuppoſed learned and Orthodox: or 3. upon the perſwaſion and profeſſion of our Anceſtors and fore-fathers: or 4. upon the determinations, injunctions, of the State, where we live: or 5. upon the generall profeſſion and practiſe of that Nation, or commonalty of perſons, amongſt whom we live: or 6. upon light and undigeſted apprehenſions of grounds, though in themſelves never ſo demonſtrative, weighty and ſubſtantiall: or 7. and laſtly, upon whatſoever is not ſufficient in a rationall way to poyſe or ballaſſe the judgement and conſcience with ſuch an aſſurance of truth, in what is in this caſe beleeved, or aſſented unto, but that they ſhall ſtill remain obnoxious and liable to be removed, and taken off, from their preſent belief, by the guſts and blaſts of contrary apprehenſions, in caſe they come in their way. The reaſon why ſuch a Faith, which is built only upon ſome, or more, or all, of theſe foundations, may well be called a *dead faith*, is becauſe it hath no other *root*, but what *is rottenneſſe*; it lives by no other principle of life, but what may be quenched, or taken from it, every hour, and conſequently may properly enough be ſaid to be *dead, even whileſt it liveth*.

[a] Iam. 2. 26.

So then the Reaſon why the *Faith* of the Anti-Scripturiſts amongſt us, which now *is not*, was *dead* (in the ſenſe declared) even whileſt it was, is cleerly this; their negligence and unfaithfullneſſe unto their own ſouls, either in not inquiring after, or in not ſeriouſly and ſtudiouſly digeſting, ſuch conſiderations and grounds, which are proper and potent, againſt all oppoſitions of contrary reaſonings, arguments, and inducements whatſoever, to eſtabliſh, root, ground, and build the judgements, ſouls, and conſciences of men, in aſſurance of the truth of the Goſpel, and of the iſſuings of the Scriptures from God. I well know that *faith is* (in Gods ſence) *the guiſt of God*; but know withall, that the reaſon why *the ſeed, which fell in the ſtony ground, was ſcorched with the heat of the ſun*, was, becauſe *it had not much earth*[a], *i.* the main reaſon, why the doctrine of the

[a] Mat. 13. 5, 6.

Gospel, in the belief of it, in the persons represented by this ground, miscarried, and came to nothing upon inducements haling and pulling a contrary way, was, because neither upon, nor after the hearing of it, they ever bestowed any labour of minde, any competent consideration upon it; nor ever took care or thought, to inquire so farre after the truth and certainty of it untill they came to such grounds and reasons, by which they might be insured, and secured hereof. By reason of this carelessenesse and neglect, they never came to *have root in themselves*[b] (as our Saviours expression is, in his interpretation of this part of the parable) *i* they never came to be established or built upon any solid foundations or proofs of the Truth of the Gospel, which they had heard: and so when the argument or motive of declining persecution, did but incounter and attempt their Faith, it soon yeelded, and gave up the ghost. The *Germans* have somewhat an unhandsome *Proverb*, which yet carrieth a savoury and pertinent truth in it: *God* (say they) *giveth every good thing, but not by the horns of bulls*. Their meaning is, that though God be the bountifull and blessed Authour and giver of all manner of blessings and good things unto men, yet he doth not ordinarily give them, at least many of them, but upon suitable applications and addressements of men themselves, for the attainment of them respectively. *Solomon* affirmeth it to be *the blessing of the Lord, that maketh rich*[c]: and yet had said a little before, that *the hand of the diligent maketh rich*[d] also. The pacification of the one saying towards the other, is as obvious, as the reconciling of the masters eye (in the proverb) with the servants hand, in making an horse fat. It is true, God sometimes by an hand of Providence not much used, casteth *riches* upon men, without the *diligence* of their own *hand*: nor is it to be denied, but that semblably he giveth Faith also, without, or at least upon very slender ingagements or applications of men, for the obtaining of it. But as the *diligent hand* is the way of his Providence most occupied, for his inriching of men with the silver and gold of this world; so is the thoughtfull, studiously bent, and inquiring soul about the things of eternity, his standing method, for his inriching of men with the *true treasure*, and making them *great* through a sound Faith, *in the Kingdom of Heaven*. And he that will not *strive to enter in by the strait gate*, is never like to be forced or thrust into it by God. But here is neither place, nor opportunity for a just or through debate of these things.

b Mat 13 21.

*Det Deus omne bonum; sed non per cornua taurum.*

c Prov. 10. 22.

d vers. 4.

Thus (good Reader) I have briefly drawn up for thy perusall, the sad History, of the originall, progresse, and catastrophe or end of that generation, or vein of men amongst us, who are fallen from a *dead faith*, to a *lively deniall* of the divine authority of the Scriptures. The ensuing discourse will (I trust) prove like *Aaron* when with his *censer*, having *incense and fire from off the altar* in it, he *stood between the living and the dead, and staied the plague* from spreading further[a]; though he could doe nothing for the raising again from the dead, any of those that were already fallen by it. Yet if God be a debtour to any gracious purpose or intention in himself, of the recovery of any of these men, *out of that snare of death, wherein their foot is taken*, and fast held (for the present) I make no question but the present

a Numb. 16. 48.

Treatise,

Treatiſe, notwithſtanding the image and ſuperſcription of the Authour ſo fully ſtamped upon it in deficiencies and infirmities, may be a commodious inſtrument in his hand for ſuch a purpoſe.

Concerning the ſubject it ſelf of the Treatiſe, the Demonſtration of the finger of God in the Scriptures, I ſhall not need either to commend, or to demonſtrate, the neceſſity of it, no not in reſpect of thoſe alſo, whoſe foot hath not as yet ſo much as begun to ſlide into the way of that abomination, which giveth away the glory of the *onely* infinitely *wiſe* and holy God in the compoſure of them, to ſinfull, weak, and contemptible men. As there is much counterfeit and clip'd coin abroad in the world; ſo is there much Faith and belief of the Authority of the Scriptures in the hearts of men, which being touch'd, will be found baſe, and weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, light. *The heart* of a man *is* ſo dangerouſly, yea and deſperately *deceitfull*, that, to ſave it ſelf a labour, and the ſweat of the brow in being conſtrained to beleeve indeed, by ſtrength of argument, and evidence of demonſtration, it will with much heat of confidence and importunity, violently perſwade him that he beleeveth already: and angerly demand of him (in *Iudas* his dialect) *what needeth this waſte* of time, in writing, and reading long diſcourſes,, to prove that, which thou approveſt already, and beleeveſt abundantly? Reader, it may be thou haſt heard of the *Latine* proverb, which tells thee that *profered ware ſtinketh*. Doubtleſſe that belief of ſupernaturall and Divine things, which thy heart, unconſtrained, uncompelled, unconvinced, and this by an high hand of argument and ſolid demonſtration, in one kinde or other, profereth and commendeth unto thee for good, for want of ſalt, can hardly be ſavoury, or ſound, or ſuch, wherein either God, or men, will much delight. But (reader) I would not have thee have *ſorrow upon ſorrow*, a long Diſcourſe upon a long Preface, or Epiſtle. *Merx ultroneæ putet.*

I have now but only a little *mint and aniſe* to *tith*, two or three particulars of lighter conſequence to impart further unto thee, and ſo thou ſhalt no longer ſuffer in the bands of an Epiſtle.

1. I deſire to give thee notice, that according to the tenour of my firſt thoughts, onely four or five of the firſt ſheets of the Treatiſe (wherein, being thereunto compelled by the importune and un-man-like clamours of ſome, I attempt that otherwiſe needleſſe piece of curioſity, τὰ λίαν πολλοῦ τι λιάζοντος, as the Greek proverb well expreſſeth it, i. *to make ſomewhat ſtraiter, then that which is ſtrait*) together with the Epiſtle Dedicatory, were intended for the preſſe. In which reſpect, there are ſome paſſages, both in the ſaid Epiſtle, and within the compaſſe of theſe ſheets, which, being calculated according to the exigencie and poſture of things amongſt us ſo many months ſince, as the coming of them forth was projected, and expected, may now, by occaſion of the diſadvantage of ſo long-delaied a publication, ſeem ſomewhat incongruous, and leſſe ſeaſonable. In this behalf, I deſire the Readers courteſie for my accommodation; and that he will pleaſe for my relief herein, to borrow of his memory, if that be able to ſupply him herewith, the ſtate and tenour of his thoughts and apprehenſions

prehenſions about the latter end of March laſt, as farre as they related to the contents of thoſe papers, when he reads them.

2. When upon the perſwaſion of ſome friends, I had taken up this additionall purpoſe, of enlarging the forementioned proportion of the diſcourſe onely with a ſummary and brief propoſall of the heads of thoſe conſiderations, which I had more largely inſiſted upon in the courſe of my Miniſtry, in order to the Vindication of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; yea and had ſatisfied my ſelf accordingly, in the propoſall and ſetting down of one or two of the firſt of theſe conſiderations; yet going on to the reſt, I clearly perceived, that their ſtrength and efficacie for the great ſervice intended, would have ſuffered much loſſe and diſadvantage in reference thereunto, if they had been confined to any narrower compaſſe of explication, then that which is now aſſigned unto them. In which reſpect, I was neceſſitated, to print them (at leaſt the greateſt part of them) as largely, as I Preached them; they who heard them Preached, and ſhall reade them Printed, will bear witneſſe, that very little alteration hath been made.

3 (And laſtly) my deſire to thee (and that more for thy own intereſt and benefit then for mine) is, that ſince the main body of the treatiſe, conſiſts of many arguments, and demonſtrations, to evince one and the ſame great concluſion and truth, *viz.* that the Scriptures are from God, though thou readeſt them ſingly one by one, and every one apart from his fellowes, yet in order to thy ſatisfaction about their ſtrength and ſufficiency to evince the ſaid concluſion, thou wilt look upon them all together, as one and the ſame intire demonſtration, and not conſult thine own diſ-ſatiſfaction or diſcontent, where there is no juſt ground, or occaſion of either, as *viz.* by finding weakneſſe and unſatisfactorineſſe (poſſibly) in any one or more of them, taken out of their conjunction, which indeed is their ſtrength. *Solomon* gives this reaſon, why *two are better then one, becauſe* (ſaith he) *if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone, when he falleth* &c. There is the like advantage in variety of arguments, for proofe of one and the ſame concluſion: if one be weak, or doubtfull in ſome particular belonging to it, and ſo leſſe ſatisfying, one or other of its fellows may very poſſibly relieve and ſupply the defect; and then it becomes valid and ſerviceable, notwithſtanding. A cable may be ſtrong and ſufficient to hold a good ſhip down laden againſt the ſtiffeſt guſt, and ſtrongeſt tempeſt of weather that can blow; and yet ſome one or two of the ſmalleſt threds or twiſts of it, may be brittle and half rotten. In like manner a diſcourſe, or body of arguments, raiſed for the demonſtration and proof of ſome important truth, may perform the engagement with power and authority, and be ſufficient to eſtabliſh the doubtfull, yea and to convince the gainſayer; though every thing delivered and aſſerted herein be not greater then exception, yea though ſome thing be obnoxious, and lieth open to the diſputes and contradictions of ſome men. To reject an authour, or book, becauſe not every waies approveable, is, being interpreted, to preſume himſelf to be a God. The Heathen Poet had more of a

a Eccleſ. 4. 9.

Chriſtian

Christian temper in him then to, when he said,

*Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis*
*Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,*
*Aut humana parum cavit natura*——

*i.* Where much doth shine, a little not so bright
Shall not offend me, which some oversight,
Or humane frailty, well occasion might.

But (Reader) whether I have quitted my self, *like a workman that need not be ashamed*, or no, in my undertaking, and whether the divinity of the Scriptures, be yet in the dark, or no, notwithstanding all that I have done to bring it forth into the light censure, and determine thou if thou pleasest. Certain I am, that he that *is about to come as a theise in the night*, will bring a *day* with him, which shall open the eyes that are now shut, and astonish the world with the brightnesse of the demonstration of this truth, which with strength of affection and desire (I am certain) with what weaknesse soever in performance, I have in the ensuing discourse laboured to evince and assert. The Heavens which have been faithfull keepers of that great treasure of the world, ever since it was committed unto their custody, *Jesus Christ*, will shew themselves as faithfull in delivering it back again unto the world, in the time appointed. In that day the mouth of that ungodlinesse which is now opened against the glory of the Scriptures, will be shut, yea and sealed up, never more to be opened to the daies of eternity. The great Lord of this day, make thee and me *worthy to stand before him* therein, by a reall beliefe, and *fervent expectation* of it, *according to the Scriptures.*

Thine to serve thee with whatsoever is his,

in the things of Jesus Christ,

From my Study in Coleman-street *London*, Decemb. 1647.

*John Goodwin.*

# The Contents of the ensuing Treatise.


Offences, whether given or taken, from whence commonly they proceed. pag. 1.

The Authours cleer intent, in the 28. Section of his Hagiomastix displayed, &c. p. 4, 5, &c.

The sence of Protestant writers concerning Scripture translations. p. 5, 6, 7.

The English Translation, not in every sence, nor yet in a proper sense, either the word of God, or foundation of Christian Religion. p. 7, 8, &c.

The Authours judgement concerning Transcripts of Scripture in the Originalls. p. 14, 15.

Concerning Translations. p. 16, 17, &c.

What properly is the Word of God, and foundation of Christian Religion. p. 17, 18,

The Authours opinion concerning the imputation of Faith, and the righteousnesse of Christ, in justification. p. 27.

Concerning the power of the civil Magistrate: the estate and condition of the soul between death and the resurrection. p. 29.

Arguments proving the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, Intrinsecall, Extrinsecall. p. 30, 31.

The first Intrinsecall Argument; the manner, or property of their stile, and phrase. p. 31, 32.

The second; the spirituality, or admirable workmanship seen in their joints, or connexions. p. 32, 33, 34.

The third; a certain Authoritativeness, or God-like speaking unto the world, &c. p. 34, 35, 36, &c.

The fourth; their strange composition, or constitution, being made up of depths, and shallows, &c. p. 36, 37, &c.

The fift; their Antiquity. p. 41, 42, &c.

The six,; the manner of the Gospels bringing in into the world,

*world, in respect of the growth, and graduall discoverics.* pag.48,49.&c.

*The seventh; a Majestique kinde of security under many seeming contradictions.* p.55,56,&c.

*The eight (and last of this head) an holy and humble ingenuity and candor in the Pen-men.* p.60,61,&c.

*Intrinsecall arguments of the latter head, drawn from the matter, and import of the Scriptures, being ten in number, propounded.* p.64,65.

*The first of these; That excellent Spirit of holinesse which breaths out of the Scriptures upon the world.* p.65,66,&c.

*The second; a potent tendency in them to advance godlinesse in the world.* p.84.85,&c.

*The third; their Authoritative and loud call upon the world, for self-deniall.* p.104,105.

*The fourth; that heart-searching property, which is so frequently, and with so much power, found to be in them,* p.116. 117,&c.

*The fift: A glorious and mighty power, which sometimes they exert and put forth, in raising and lifting up the hearts of men.* p.133.134.&c.

*The sixth: A like power sometimes exercised by them in terrifying and shaking the souls and consciences of men.* p.138.139.

*The seventh: A great and marvellous transforming power frequently exerted by them.* p.148.149.&c.

*The eighth: The heights and depths of that wisdome and understanding, which are found in the transaction of the Gospel.* p.157.158.159.&c.

*The ninth: The mysteriousnesse of the said transaction.* p.218. 219.&c.

*The tenth (and last of this head) The transcendent importance of the Gospel, by way of benefit and blessing upon the world.* p.223.224.&c.

*Two kindes of Arguments extrinsecall, proving the Scriptures to be the word of God: The first, such passages, or acts of Providence, by which God owns the Scriptures, as his. The latter, such either doings or sayings of men, which are so far confederate with those providences of God, as to joyn in testimo-*

*ny with them on the behalf of the Scriptures.* p.227.228.

*The first, of the former of these kindes: The preserving of the body of the Scriptures intire, and free from corruption, or maim, for so many generations, as have passed over them.* p.228.229.

*The second: The high hand of successe, wherewith the Gospel, even in the infancy of it, and soon after it went forth into the world, was attended.* p.267.268 &c.

*The third: An exact and punctuall fulfilling of the propheceyes contained in the Scriptures.* p.305.306.&c.

*The fourth: The great and wonderfull effects, which God daily produceth in the world by the Scriptures: and particularly by the Gospel,* p.320.321 &c.

*The fifth: The consideration of the tenour or manner of the Government of the world, and of the workings of the hearts and spirits of all kindes of men in it.* p.332.333.&c.

*The sixth (and last of this head) The remarkeable judgements inflicted by God upon the enemies of the Scriptures.* p.360.361 &c.

*The first of the latter sort: the consideration of some things, which have been, and are daily acted and done by men: as* viz. *first, such by which the predictions and propheticall carriages of the Scripture (at least some of the most considerable) are fulfilled. Secondly, such by which the doctrinall or sententious passages thereof, are verified and asserted.* p.367.368.&c. *The former of these opened.* p.368.&c. *The latter.* 370.&c.

*The latter (of this latter sort) is: The consideration of such sayings of men, whether in their writings, or otherwise, which reflect the light of divine Authority upon them.* p.371.372.&c.

THE

# THE Divine Authority OF THE SCRIPTVRES Re-asserted.

*Brethren* (saith the Apostle) *be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding, be men*[a]. If the voice of this exhortation were in both the branches conscienciously remembred by those, who are most concern'd in it, it would be as a tree of love and peace in the midst of the Paradise of the Churches of God. There is scarce any offence either given, or taken, but proceeds, either from strength in *malice*, or weakness in *understanding*, or both. When our Saviour, being *adjured by the High Priest, to tell him whether he was the Son of God, or no*, made this answer; *Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven*; did he give the least occasion of offence unto him? and yet this *High Priest rent his cloaths, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now ye heve heard his blasphemy.* And that of the Prophet *Hosea* then taking place, *And there shall be like people, like Priest*[b], the people also voted with their Priest, *He is guilty of death*[c]. If the High Priest, and his fellow-Priests, had justified our Saviour in his words and actions, which, had they not been *men in malice*, instead of *understanding*, and *children in understanding*, instead *of malice*, they would

[a] 1 Cor. 14. 20.

[b] Hos. 4. 9.

[c] Mat. 26. 66.

would (according to their duty) have done, doubtleſſe the common people alſo had joyned with them in a concurrent ſuffrage for his juſtification. But the obſervation taken up by *Auguſtine* long ſince, is nothing but the experience of all ages. *Some men* (ſaith he) *of competent underſtandings, had rather quarrell with what they underſtand not, then ſeek out the true underſtanding of it: and ſo inſtead of modeſt inquirers, ſhew themſelves proud ſlanderers.* He himſelf was ſo hotly purſued by the clamours and outcries of ſome of the *underſtanding ones* of his age, that he was a man infected with errours, and poiſoned the world with falſe Doctrines, that he was conſtrained to flee for refuge, to a publike declaration of himſelf in the particulars, which were to his diſparagement charged upon him: and upon this occaſion wrote that Tract, which is found in the 7th Tome of his Works, intituled, *Auguſtins Anſwer to certain Articles falſly fathered, or charged upon him* [e]; beginning thus: *Some men out of a forgetfullneſſe of Chriſtian and brotherly love, are ſo importunely bent, by all waies and means whatſoever, to miſchief my reputation, that being blinded by a deſire of doing harm, they perceive not how they overthrow their own. For they frame, and gather together, and make up, in ſuch ſayings or ſentences as they can, prodigious untruths of certain moſt fond and fooliſh blaſphemies: and theſe they carry about, to ſhew and inculcate into many, both publikely and privately, affirming, they are the ſame, in my ſenſe and meaning, as they are expreſſed in their diabolicall catalogue: Which opinions or Tenets, we might readily and ſufficiently prove to be thus carried and toſſed up and down,* for no other end, *but to ſtirre up a ſpirit of envy againſt us, by anathematizing them all at once; Would not the malignity of thoſe, to whom it is a burthen that we ſhould be thought well of, make it matter of ſuſpicion, if we ſhould take ſo brief a courſe for our vindication* [f]. I ſee the common ſaying is not yet like to fail: *Sicut nunc, ſic & olim*, As it is to day, ſo was it yeſterday: and (as *Solomon* ſaith) *there is no new thing under the Sunne.*

[d] Nonnulli intelligentes citiùs volunt exagitare, quod non intelligunt, quàm quærere ut intelligant: & non fiunt humiles inquiſitores, ſed ſuperbi calumniatores. *Aug. de temp. Serm.* 72.

[e] Ad articulos aliquot ſibi falsò impoſitos, Auguſtini Reſponſio.

[f] Quidam Chriſtianæ ac fraternæ charitatis oblitus in tantum [illegible]ſtimationem noſtram quoquo modo ſtudent lædere, ut ſuam ſe evertere nocendi cupiditate non videant. [illegible]texunt enim, & qualibus poſſunt ſententijs comprehendunt, ineptiſſimarum quarundam blaſphemiarum prodigioſa mendacia, eaq; oſtendenda & ingerenda multis publicè privatímq; circumferunt, aſſerentes talia in noſtro eſſe ſenſu, qualia diabolico indiculo continentur. Quæ falsò in nos ad excitandam invidiam jactitari, facile & ſufficienter ſubſcriptione unius probaremus anathematis, niſi malignitas eorum, qui ſe gravari putant, ſi de nobis benè ſentiatur, ipſam ſubſcriptionis noſtræ brevitatem ſuſpectam eſſet habitura.

Moſt

Moſt certain I am, if I underſtand what plain Engliſh words ſignifie, that there was no more cauſe given by me in the 28th Section of my late Diſcourſe, intituled, *Hagiomaſtix diſplayed &c.* why any man ſhould either think, or ſay, that I deny the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; then was given by our Saviour in the words lately cited from *Matth.26.63.* why either the High Prieſt, or people ſhould accuſe him of *blaſphemy*; or in theſe, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three daies I will raiſe it up* [a], why the *falſe witneſſes*, ſpoken of *Matth.26.60 61.* ſhould charge him with ſaying, *I can deſtroy the Temple of God, and build it in three daies.* Somewhat indeed there was in what our Saviour ſpake, of what theſe witneſſes informed againſt him; but becauſe they quite altered the nature and import of what he intended in his words, the Holy Ghoſt himſelf brands them with the infamous character of **falſe Witneſſes**; which brand of infamie will never be gotten out of their fore-heads to the worlds end. But he that hath commanded me to *recompence unto no man evil for evil* [b], hath graciouſly opened the ear of my heart and ſoul to hearken unto my charge in that behalf, and hath made me ſtrong to bear the burthens, whether of the weakneſſe, or wickedneſſe of men. Therefore I ſhall without the leaſt reflection in way of diſparagement upon any the perſons of thoſe, who have unworthily ſought to make my ſavour ſtink in the ſight of men, with a compoſed ſpirit addreſſe my ſelf to render an account, as well of my judgement touching the Authority of the Scriptures, as of my intent in the ſaid 28. Section of my Book. When that ſaying of Chriſt to *Peter*, concerning his beloved Diſciple, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* was generally miſunderſtood by the Diſciples themſelves, who by a common miſpriſion, made them to import, that *that Diſciple ſhould not die* [c], the holy Ghoſt himſelf thought it good, by the pen of the Evangeliſt, to rectifie the errour, only by ſetting down the words, in oppoſition to the interpretation, or miſtake; *Yet Jeſus ſaid not unto him, he ſhall not die: but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* ſometimes, not only a ſpirit of enmity and envy, but of love it ſelf, may through an inadvertencie, and neglect to ingage ſecond thoughts, miſapprehend the genuine intent of what is ſpoken; yea and this in ſuch caſes, wherein the very repetition of the

[a] Joh.2.19.

[b] Rom.12.17. Immenſæ virtutis eſt, non ſentire te eſſe percuſſum *Sen.*

[c] Joh.21.23.

word ſpoken, is ſufficient to evict the miſapprehenſion. But

1. To cleer the ſaid Section of any thing, either intended, or ſaid, againſt the Authority of the Scriptures; evident it is,

1. That it was no part of my intent in the ſaid Section, nor any waies relating to the buſineſſe I had in hand, to declare mine own judgement, either in the affirmative or negative, concerning the Authority of the Scriptures; nor yet to put my Antagoniſts upon it to declare theirs in this; but only to ingage them, to declare plainly and diſtinctly, what they mean by the word, *Scriptures*, when they affirm and maintain *the deniall of them to be the word of God, to be* an errour juſtly *puniſhable with death*. The Reaſon why I deſired to draw my adverſaries to this Explication of themſelves, was, becauſe I apprehended (and doe apprehend ſtill) that when they ſhall give a fair and reaſonable account of what is herein demanded, the unreaſonableneſſe of their aſſertion, wherein they maintain it as a matter worthy of death, to deny the *Scriptures to be the Word of God*, will thereby more manifeſtly appear.

2. Becauſe I deſired that their explication in this kinde might be pertinent and proper, not frivolous, I judged it not amiſſe to attempt by argument, to put them by, or take them off from two explications, which I conceived they were moſt likely to pitch upon, either one, or both; both of them being impertinent to their occaſion. The former of the two from which I deſired to take them off, was; that by *Scriptures*, they meant the Engliſh Tranſlation; the later, the Originall Hebrew and Greek copies. From the former of theſe, I conceived I ſhould take them off upon this ground or conſideration; *viz.* becauſe I ſuppoſe *it is no foundation of Chriſtian Religion, to beleeve that the Scriptures in this ſenſe* or conſideration, *are the Word of God*, i. (as I preſently explain my ſelf) that *God ſpake to his Prophets or Apoſtles in Engliſh*; I now adde, much leſſe that he ſpake unto either, in thoſe very words, phraſes, and ſentences in the Engliſh tongue, of which the ſyſteme or body of our Engliſh Tranſlation is made up. Who could have imagined, that ſuch an expreſſion, eſpecially in conjunction with ſuch an explication as this, would ever have been obnoxious to a ſiniſter interpretation? much leſſe be forced into any ſuch ſence, which ſhould imply a deniall

of

of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures? Have not men of the most eminent learning and worth amongst Protestants, expressed themselves upon the like occasion in termes farre more liable to exception, then mine, and yet are blamelesse? *We* (saith learned Doctor *Whitaker*) *acknowledge no edition* [of the Scriptures] *authentique,* [*i.* of Divine Authority,] *but the Hebrew, in the old, and the Greek in the new Testament. As for Translations, if they agree* (*viz.* with the Originalls) *We approve them: if they disagree, We reject them*[a]. Now most certain it is, that our English Translations (for they are many) take the very best of them (as suppose the last, or any of the former) doe in very many things *disagree* from the Originall; and therefore, according to the judgement of this Grave and Orthodox Writer, (at least if his words be rigorously dealt with) ought to be rejected: which is a saying 7 times more commodious for left-handed Interpreters to work upon, then any of mine. And yet this Authour hath this testimonie from the pen of Presbyterie, *that he never held any opinion that was counted erroneous: nor any private peculiar opinion, but what was commonly held in the Church of God*[b].

[a] Nullam nos editionem, nisi Hebraicam in veteri, & Græcam in novo Testamento, authenticam facimus. Translationes, si conveniunt, ptobamus: si discrepant, reijcimus. *Whitak. in Contr. de Scrip Qu.* 2. *cap.* 7.

[b] M. *Edw. Antapol p.* 40.

*Chamier*, a learned and faithfull Advocate of the Protestant cause against the Papists, and *Bellarmine* in particular, concerning Scripture Translations, writeth thus: *We* (saith he) *though We approve of other* [Editions or Translations] *more or lesse, yet We acknowledge them to be made but by a private spirit, as farre as every mans judgement, skillfullnesse in Languages, diligence and sincerity, were able to reach and attain.* —— *Therefore there is none, whether in our own tongue, or in any other, unto which We think meet to subject either our selves, or other men.* And a little after: *As for Translations; the sense of Protestants is this: that all of them, of what standing, name, or credit soever they be, With what diligence, sincerity, learning soever they were made, are only so farre certain, as they agree with the first context, I mean, as farre as they expresse that sence, which is certainly manifest to be the sence of the Hebrew and Greek words. But if they vary or swerve never so little from hence, that sence which they give or expresse, We judge, neither to be Divine, nor authentique, nor canonicall, but meer-*

[b] Nos verò, etsi alias aliis plùs, minúsve probemus, tamen non negamus confectas esse omnes privato spiritu, quantum contendere potuit cujusq; & judicij acumen, & linguarum peritia, & cum sinceritate diligentia, &c. & paulò post: Itaq; nulla est, sive nostrorum, sive aliorum hominum, cui vel nos ipsos, vel alios, addicere velimus. Et rursus paulò post. Quod attinet ad versiones, Catholici sic sentiunt, eas omnes, cujuscunq; sint aut temporis, aut nominis aut dignitatis, quantalibet diligentiâ, sinceritate, doctrinâ factæ sint, eò tantum certas esse, quòd cum primo contextu conveniant, quatenus, inquam, eum sensum exprimunt, quem certo constat esse Hebraicorum & Græcorum vocabulorum. Quod si inde discedant vel tantillum, tùm quem ille sensum reddunt, non esse divinum, non Authenticum, non canonicum, sed merè humanum. *Chamier. Panstr. Tom. 1. l. 12. c. 2. § 35.*

[c] (with much more of like importance:) So then

the sence of this Authour cleerly is, that no translation can be any further *certain* unto any man (*viz.* that it is, or, that it contains in it, the word of God) then as farre as the sence which is therein expresst is **certainly manifest** unto him, to be the sense of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* words; and consequently can be no foundation of Religion unto him. Which, whether it be not a saying 10. degrees harder then any of mine, let men, who have not sacrificed their judgements upon the service of their affections, judge. Certain I am, that there is not one of many thousands amongst us, to whom it is **certainly manifest**, that any *sense* at all expressed in the *English Translation*, is the sense of the Hebrew and Greek words: and consequently to whom it can be **certainly manifest**, that the said Translation is *the word of God*: and how then should it be a foundation of Christian Religion unto him? *The ancient Christians* (saith *Calvin*) *though they wanted the knowledge of tongues, especially the Hebrew, yet they allwaies ingenuously acknowledged it best to have recourse thereunto, that from thence the true and genuine sense of things might be had.* From whence it evidently appears, 1. that these ancient Christians, made use of Scripture-Translations; 2. that notwithstanding, they did not judge them to *be the word of God, or the foundation of Religion*; because then they had had no need of making recourse to any other word of God, or writing whatsoever, for their regulation. Doctor *Featly*, in his late treatise, intituled *the Dippers dip't*, pag. 1. & 2. hath these words. *For no Translation is simply Authentical, or the undoubted word of God. In the undoubted word of God there can be no errour: But in Translations there may be, and are errours. The bible translated therefore is not the undoubted*

[a] Veteres, quamvis linguarum cognitione, ac præsertim Hebraicæ, destituerentur, ingenuè tamen semper agnoscunt, nihil esse melius quàm ipsam consulere, ut inde verus germanusq; sensus hauriatur. *Calvin. in 2. Decretum 4. Sess. Syn. Trid.*

word

*Word of God, but ſo farre onely as it agreeth with the originall.* And how few are there amongſt us, that are able to ſay, how farre the *Engliſh Tranſlation* agreeth with the *Originall*? This Treatiſe was lately publiſhed by Authority, and hath been printed and reprinted, 5. or 6. times, no man, that ever I heard of, making the leaſt exception againſt, or taking the leaſt offence at the ſaid paſſage. *Hierome* of old, called Tranſlations of the Bible, *cœnoſos rivulos*, [b] *muddy ſtreams* or rivolets, in compariſon of the Originalls. And *Auguſtine* affirmeth, *that men skilfull in the Latine tongue, have yet need of two tongues more, namely the Hebrew and the Greek to attain the knowledge of the Divine Scriptures.* [c] But if Tranſlations were theſe *Divine Scriptures*, men need no more tongues for the underſtanding of them, then that onely wherein they are tranſlated. It were eaſie to adde many more teſtimonies from the pens of learned and Orthodox men, wherein they expreſſe themſelves concerning Tranſlations, in words by many degrees more obnoxious to an obeliſque, then any us'd by me. But it is one part of my preſent deſigne, to plead my cauſe with as much brevity, as the long furrows, which the ploughers have made upon my back, will any waies admit.

It ſeems that is good Divinity againſt the Anabaptiſts, which is blaſphemie againſt the Presbyterians.

[b] Quibus ſi diſplicet unda fontis puriſſimi, cœnoſos rivulos bibant *Hieronymus. Epiſt.* 102. *ad Marcellam.*

[c] Latinæ linguæ homines duabus alijs ad Scripturarum divinarum cognitionem habent opus, Hebræâ ſcilicet, & Græca. *Aug. de Doctr. Chriſt. l.* 2. *c.* 11.

Therefore having thus the buſh of Authority at our backs (in the next place) let us try it out with our Accuſers by the dint of a few compendious arguments whether the Engliſh Tranſlation of the Scriptures, be in every ſenſe, yea or in a proper ſenſe, the word of God, or any ſufficient foundation of Religion unto men. If upon cleerneſſe of debate it ſhall appear, that there is a ſenſe, and that obvious and plain enough, eſpecially if proper alſo, and moſt preciſely correſponding with the term, wherein the Engliſh-Tranſlation of the Scriptures, is not *the Word of God*; then have thoſe men quitted themſelves moſt unworthy of men, and much more of Chriſtians, who having put an adulterate ſenſe of their own upon the ſaid Aſſertion, have laid the baſtard at my door; attempting with both their hands to build up their own Intereſts and honours, with the ruines and ſcattered ſtones of my reputation; and have abuſed the ears both of Magiſtrates and people, with ſhameleſſe outcries and ſuggeſtions againſt me, as if I were a man of ſtrange opinions, an Aſſertour of dangerous Doctrines, a ſpreader of I know not what abſurd errors and hereſies, and in

every point like unto themſelves; when as in deed and in truth (I ſpeak as in the preſence of God) the whole *root of the matter*, [d] and intire cauſe of all this duſt, is nothing elſe but the turbulent and irregular motions of their own fancies, working and beating and tearing themſelves this way and that, to catch ſome live fly or other in my writings, which they may kill, and ſo put it, being dead, into my oyntment; that that ſavour of truth which it ſends forth, being a ſavour of death to their unworthy opinions and practiſes, may be made to ſtink in the noſtrills of men. I never denied, but have a thouſand times over affirmed, and by many Arguments and demonſtrations evinced the Scriptures to be the word of God; nay, I never denied, but now affirm, that in a ſenſe (which I ſhall afterwards explain) even the *Engliſh Scriptures*, or *Engliſh Tranſlation* it ſelf (and much more *the Originalls*) may be called *the Word of God*. But that in ſtrictneſſe and exactneſſe of ſpeaking (which is the dialect I ſpeak in the ſaid controverted Section) the Engliſh Tranſlation is not *the Word* of God, I preſume will be made as clear in truth, as the Sun is in light at noon day, by theſe enſuing demonſtrations.

[d] Job 19.28.

Firſt, If our Engliſh Tranſlation be the *Scriptures or Word of God, or the foundation of Chriſtian Religion*, I deſire to know, whether our laſt and neweſt Tranſlation, or that which was made at *Geneva*, or that of our old Church-Bibles, or that, ſet forth long ſince by M^r *Tyndall*, or any other particular Tranſlation in the Engliſh tongue (for there are ſeverall others, eſpecially of diverſe pieces of the Bible, beſides theſe) be theſe *Scriptures*, this *Word of God*, this *foundation of Chriſtian Religion*? To affirm that they are all and every one of them *the Word of God*, and *foundation of Chriſtian Religion*, is to make the word of God to differ from it ſelf, yea to make it incoherent, and in ſome things inconſiſtent with it ſelf. For that every one of theſe Tranſlations reſpectively, differ from other, yea and in ſome places very materially; is a thing ſo well and generally known, to thoſe who have compared them; and ſo eaſie to be known unto others alſo, who will pleaſe but to take a little pains to inquire, that I judge it needleſſe to inſiſt upon any proof of it. To ſingle out any one of theſe Tranſlations, as ſuppoſe the laſt, and to ſet this

crown

crown of glory upon the head of it (with the rejection of it's fellows) *this is the Scripture, the Word of God, the foundation of Chriſtian Religion, and none other,* is of dangerous conſequence many waies; and (I preſume) will not be juſtified by any conſidering man.

Secondly, If the *Engliſh Tranſlation be the Word of God, the foundation of Chriſtian Religion* &c. then was there no *Word of God,* no *foundation of Chriſtian Religion,* before the *Scriptures* were *Tranſlated into Engliſh*: for certain it is, that nothing is, or can be, before it ſelf or it's own being.

Thirdly, If the *Engliſh Tranſlation be the Word of God, and ſo the foundation of Religion*; then all profeſſours of Chriſtianity thorowout the world, who are ignorant of the Engliſh tongue, and do not build their Faith upon the *Engliſh Tranſlation,* build beſides the true *foundation, the Word of God.*

Fourthly, If the *Engliſh Tranſlation be the Word of God, and foundation of Religion,* why not the *Dutch, French,* and *Spaniſh* Tranſlation, as well as it (with all others?) If every of theſe *Tranſlations* be the Scriptures, the *Word of God,* &c. as well as the Engliſh, then do the *Scriptures and the Word of God* really differ from themſelves: for there is nothing more evident, then that theſe *Tranſlations* really differ one from another, the reſpective languages wherein they are framed, really differing one from another.

Fifthly, If the *Engliſh Tranſlation be the Word of God, the foundation,* &c. then may there be, yea and are, many errours *in the Word of God, and in the foundation of Religion.* For that there are many errours and miſtakes in all and every our *Engliſh Tranſlations,* is a thing undeniable.

Sixthly, If *our Engliſh Tranſlation be the Word of God, the foundation,* &c. then the Originall *Hebrew and Greek copies,* eſpecially wherein they differ in ſenſe and import of matter from our *Engliſh Tranſlation* (as in many places they do) are not the *Word of God, nor foundation of Religion.* For *the Word of God* admitts no difference in it ſelf, nor are *the foundations of Religion* divided in themſelves.

Seventhly, The word of God, which the Apoſtle command's *Titus* to hold forth in his preaching, is called λόγος ὑγιὴς, ἀκαταγ-

νως Θ,

νως Θ, *i. a ſound Word, which cannot be condemned* or reproved, *Tit.* 2. 8. But our Engliſh Tranſlation, is not ὑγιὴς, ἀνεπλάγνως Θ, every way ſound, or irreproveable, or ſo ſound that it cannot be reproved. Therefore it is not the word of God.

Eightly, *The Word of God* (properly taken) is that *Word*, which all Miniſters of the Goſpel ought to *preach*; and to be *inſtant* (*viz.* in preaching it) *in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon* (as the Apoſtle injoines *Timothy*) But all Miniſters of the Goſpel, are not bound to preach the *Engliſh Tranſlation* (nor indeed any Miniſter at all, at leaſt by any order, or injunction by God) Therefore the *Engliſh Tranſlation* certainly is not *the Word of God* in a proper ſenſe.

Ninthly, *The Word of God, is that Word of Truth* (as *James* calleth it [a]) and *that incorruptible ſeed* (as *Peter* [b],) of which the whole generation of the Saints are begotten again, and new born. But the whole generation of the Saints are not begotten again or new born of the Engliſh Tranſlation. *Ergo.*

[a] Jam. 1. 18.
[b] 1 Pet. 1. 23.

Laſtly, If no *Tranſlation* whatſoever, nor any, either written, or printed copie whatſoever, be *the Word of God*, or *foundation of Religion*, certainly *our Engliſh Tranſlation* cannot challenge this honour; but rather thoſe *Hebrew* and *Greek* copies, whether written, or printed, which are called, Originall. Now that theſe are not properly the *Word of God, nor foundation of Religion*, is evident, 1. Becauſe the word of God had a being, and was extant in the world, *viz.* in the hearts and conſciences of men, before there was any copie of this word extant in writing, either in the one language, or the other. Now that which is in being, or hath a being before another, cannot be ſaid to be that other thing which followeth after. *Moſes* is generally acknowledged by us to be the firſt penman of *the Scriptures, or Word of God*; and that the world had continued more then 2000. years before he was born. But to affirm that there was no *Word of God*, in the world, no *foundation of Religion*, for the ſpace of 2000. years and upwards, is to contradict that which is plainly, and in many places aſſerted, in the written word of God. Beſides, the Goſpel it ſelf was in the world, and beleeved on in the world, before any of the Evangeliſts put forth their hand to that bleſſed work, of putting into writing the ſumme and ſubſtance of it. Therefore

fore their writings cannot properly be called the Goſpel, becauſe the Goſpel had a compleat being and exiſtence in the world, whilſt as yet they were not. 2. Becauſe there are many differences, and might poſſibly have been, and yet may be, many more, in, and between thoſe Hebrew, and Greek copies themſelves, which yet are indifferently and with equall reverence on all hands, all termed, the *Originalls*; yea the beſt, and trueſt, and moſt genuine of them, may in time, either thorough the ignorance, or negligence, or malice, whether of Scribes, or Printers, or over-ſeers of preſſes, or all, be corrupted: but the word of God, properly ſo called, is alwaies pure, univerſally true, and incorruptible. 3. And laſtly, becauſe no man can have any aſſurance, that either the Scribe, or Printer, of any of the Originall copies, now extant in the world, whether Hebrew, or Greek, was either infallibly directed, or extraordinarily aſſiſted from Heaven, either in the tranſcribing, or in the printing of them. Now no writing, or ſyſteme of words and ſentences whatſoever, which a man cannot reaſonably, and upon good grounds judge and conclude, to have been committed to paper by ſpeciall direction and warrant from God, can or ought to be a *foundation of Religion* unto him, or looked upon as the indubitable *Word of God.* And this (I truſt) will abundantly ſerve to clear and juſtifie, that expreſſion (ſo much quarrelled at) wherein I deny the *Engliſh Scriptures* or *Tranſlation*, to be the *foundation of Chriſtian Religion*, or *the Word of God:* which was the former explication of the two, from which my deſire was, in the fore-mentioned Section, to divert my Antagoniſts (as before was ſignified.)

2. For the latter explication, which I alſo conceiv'd they might very poſſibly have chopt upon, the tenour of it was this, That by the word *Scriptures*, in the ſaid opinion made puniſhable by the Ordinance with death, they mean the *Originall Hebrew and Greek copies*, out of which (*it is ſaid, and I beleeve*) our *Engliſh Scriptures or Tranſlations*, have been taken and made. From this explication of themſelves, I thought I might readily, and with abundance of conviction, take them off, by this conſideration; *viz.* that *there are very few men in the Kingdome, not one of a thouſand, that underſtand either of theſe languages*; I now adde, no,

nor yet know so much as whether there be any such languages or no, but onely by hear-say, and upon the credit of men; and consequently, cannot know, but upon the same terms, or ground of belief, whether there be any such *Originall Copies* or no; much lesse can they know, but still upon the same fallible grounds, that the matter, or substance of things expressed in the *English Translation*, was taken out of, or is conteined in, the said copies. Now to make it a crime punishable with death, for men to deny such writings or books to be *the Word of God*, which they have no more reason or ground to judge to be so, but only common report, or the bare assertions of men, will (I beleeve) upon due consideration be found altogether inconsistent with those principles of equity, which ought to rule in all legislation, or making of Laws. For very possible it is, that he may truly, and cordially, and savingly beleeve the Scriptures, that is, that which indeed is *the Word of God*, to be *the Word of God*, who yet shall deny any Originall copie, whether *Hebrew*, or *Greek*, now extant in the world, to be *the Word of God*, at least, properly and emphatically, that is, so to be *the Word of God*, as to have no mixture of corruption, or of that which is not *the Word of God*, in it. Yea the truth is, that in this sense, they, who both have the greatest skill, and insight into the Originall languages, yea and who beleeve the Scriptures unto salvation, cannot upon any sufficient, at least not upon any infallible ground beleeve any Originall copie whatsoever under heaven, whether Hebrew, or Greek, to be *the Word of God*: yea, I have yet to add, that which is more then all this; Suppose the very αὐτόγραφα, the very same copies, which were written with the hand of the holy penmen of the Scriptures themselves, were yet extant; yea and were infallibly known, to be so; yet except it were infallibly known also, that they were no waies corrupted, rased, or interlin'd, since they came from the hands of the said Pen-men, no person whatsoever were able infallibly to say and conclude, that these (in the sense specified) are *the Word of God*. The reason is, because *the Word of God* (in the said proper sense) is intirely, and universally, in all, and in every part of it, pure, and incorrupt, like God himself; therefore such copies or Transcripts, which are in any part corrupt, are not *the Word of God* (in this sense)

and

and ſuch which are not infallibly known to be univerſally incorrupt, cannot (in the ſaid ſenſe) be infallibly known to be *the Word of God.* Yea *the Word of God* (in the ſenſe now argued) being not only intirely, univerſally, and in every part of it incorrupt, but alſo proportionably uncapable of corruption, ſimply incorruptible; evident it is, that no writing or tranſcript whatſoever, though infallibly known to contain nothing in it for the preſent, but *the Word of God*, can yet (in the ſaid ſenſe) be truly called *the Word of God*, becauſe though it be uncorrupt, yet it is not incorruptible. And this (I truſt) is ſufficient, yea and ſuper-ſufficient, to ſtop the mouth of that weakneſſe (that I ſay not, wickedneſſe) which hath been ſo wide opened in proclaiming an inoffenſive and moſt innocent paſſage, ſpeaking nothing but words of ſoberneſſe and of truth, as guilty of a moſt foul and horrid crime.

But ſecondly, to wipe off that importune aſperſion of denying the Authority of the Scriptures to be Divine, which the enemies of my peace (yet not ſo much of mine, as of their own) are ſtill in a reſtleſſe manner caſting upon me; I ſhall plainly and briefly here give an account unto the world of my judgement, as well in the negative, as affirmative, concerning the Scriptures, and their Authority; as likewiſe concerning Tranſlations of Scripture (in the generall) and ſhall further declare my ſenſe (though very briefly alſo) touching the originalls. I ſhall deliver my ſelf as touching all theſe particulars, in certain brief poſitions, or concluſions.

Firſt, if by *Scriptures*, be meant the matter and ſubſtance of things conteined and held forth in the books of the old and new Teſtament, commonly known amongſt Proteſtants by the name of *Canonicall*, I fully and with all my heart and all my ſoul beleeve them to be of *Divine Authority*, and none other then *the Word of God*; and (God aſſiſting) ſhall rather expoſe my ſelf to a thouſand deaths, then deny them ſo to be. As for example; I fully and abſolutely beleeve, that theſe aſſertions (with the like expreſſed in the ſame writing with them) 1. That Jeſus Chriſt is God. 2. That he is the Son of God. 3. He was made man. 4. That he died for the ſalvation of the world, that he roſe again from the dead, that whoſoever beleeves on him

ſhall be ſaved; that whoſoever beleeves not on him, ſhall be condemned (with a thouſand more beſides) all theſe aſſertions (I ſay) I fully and abſolutely beleeve, not only to be Truths, but Truths of ſpeciall revelation from God unto the world. I have lately imparted unto many others, and that at large, the grounds of my belief and confidence in this kinde: the brief heads of which grounds, I have annexed to this preſent diſcourſe, in the cloſe of it.

Secondly, if by *Scriptures* be meant, all the letters, ſyllables, words, phraſes, ſentences, and periods of ſpeech, expreſſed in the ſaid books, called *Canonicall*, whether Tranſlated, or in theſe Originalls (I mean in ſuch, either Hebrew or Greek copies, as are commonly extant, and uſed amongſt us) I know no ground why I ſhould beleeve them to be *the Word of God*; that is, why I ſhould beleeve, that all, and every the ſaid ſyllables, words, phraſes, *&c.* were in any ſpeciall or extraordinary way given, or appointed by God, to convey thoſe ſpirituall truths and myſteries unto the underſtandings and mindes of men, which he hath been graciouſly pleaſed to reveal from heaven, for their ſalvation. Concerning Tranſlations, the caſe is more clear; there being none of theſe, but which carry the manifeſt marks of humane oſcitancie and weakneſſe in them. Concerning ſuch Originalls, as were mentioned; firſt, though for the Hebrew copies, it is more probable (of the two) that all the ſyllables, words, and phraſes in theſe, are the ſame, unto which the Originall Pen-men of theſe writings, were in ſpeciall manner directed by God; yet I know no law, either of Reaſon, or Religion, that binds me to beleeve, that no Tranſcriber of them out of their firſt Originalls, no Printer of them out of theſe Tranſcripts, ever failed, or miſcarried after the manner of men, in theſe negotiations. So that as on the one hand, I dare not ſay, but that in ſome of theſe copies, there may be all things, even to words, ſyllables, and letters, of divine inſpiration; ſo on the other I cannot be confident, that they are. As for the Originall Greek copies, it is generally known to thoſe, who have compared ſeverall editions of them together, that there are many differences and varieties of readings, and ſome of them ſomewhat conſiderable, between copie and copie, edition and edition. Now certain it is

that

that God, who is *the Authour of peace, and not of confuſion*, did not order or direct his firſt pen-men of this part of the Scriptures, to publiſh different copies of thoſe things, which they were reſpectively ſtirred up and appointed by him to impart by writing unto the world. Nor is it any matter of Faith, perhaps not of prudence, where editions and copies varie, and are at odds amongſt themſelves, to interpoſe by way of poſitive umpirage between them, upon any ſuch terms, as to determine and conclude, that this, or that, or any other determinately, runs parallell in all things, and without the leaſt variation, with the prototype, or firſt copie it ſelf.

Thirdly, though I do not beleeve, that any Originall exemplar or copie of the Scriptures, now extant amongſt us, is ſo purely *the Word of God*, but that it may very poſſibly, have a mixture, or at leaſt a tincture, of the word of men in it, yet I confidently beleeve, that the Providence of God, and the love which he bears to his own glory, as well in the condemnation of the wicked and unbeleevers, as in the ſalvation of his choſen, have ſo far interpoſed and watched over the great and gracions diſcovery and Revelation which he made of himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt unto the world, that thoſe books or writings, wherein it was in all the branches and particularities at firſt imparted unto the world, neither as yet have ſuffered, nor ever ſhall ſuffer, any ſuch violation, mutilation, or falſification in any kinde, either thorough the ignorance, negligence, or malice of men, but that they will be able, ſufficiently, yea abundantly to furniſh the world, men of all ſorts and conditions, with the knowledge of all things, neceſſary to be known, either for their honourable and Chriſtian deportment in this preſent world, or for their everlaſting ſalvation, and exaltation in that which is to come.

Fourthly, concerning Tranſlations, though I judge none of them to be *the Word of God* (in the ſenſe lately argued againſt) that is, the pure *Word of God*, without any imbaſement at all by that which is humane; nor yet in ſuch a ſenſe, as the Originall copies may be called *the Word of God*, which do not only expreſſe and hold forth the revealed will, or minde of God, as Tranſlations (at leaſt in part) do, but hold them forth in that very language, and for the moſt part (if not altogether) in the ſelf ſame

individuall words and phraſes, wherein God himſelf directed the publication of them by writing, unto the world, which Tranſlations do not; yet I judge them one of the greateſt bleſſings that God ever vouchſafed unto the nations, and Gentile part of the world; and conceive, that though they do not (even the beſt of them) expreſſe the will and minde of God, in that language or ſameneſſe of words, wherein God ordered the firſt publication of them by writing; no nor yet ſo intirely, thorowly, purely, or emphatically, as the Originalls do; yet they generally (even the worſt and moſt imperfect of them, that I know) expreſſe and hold forth ſo much of the minde, counſell, and will of God, by the true knowledge and underſtanding whereof, men may be brought to *live godlily, and righteouſly, and ſoberly* in this preſent world, and conſequently, to *that immortall and undefiled inheritance which is reſerved in the Heavens* for thoſe that beleeve.

Fifthly, though I judge no Tranſlation whatſoever, either for gracefullneſſe of language, ſignificancie of terms, majeſty of expreſſion (with the like) to be equall to the Originall Hebrew and Greek; yet I conceive that there is no Tranſlation ſo farre degenerate or ſo diſadvantagiouſly compil'd, but that carrieth θεῖόν τι, ſomewhat differing by way of excellencie from the manner of men, in the phraſe and language thereof; yea that which is ſufficient, by the ordinary bleſſing of God upon a conſciencious and intent reading, or conſideration of it, to evince the deſcent of the matter conteined in it, to be from God, as a ſeal of armes upon the outſide of a letter, is ſufficient to diſcover from what perſon of honour the matter or contents of the letter come. Yet

Sixthly, I conceive the matter of the Scriptures, I mean thoſe glorious and Divine Truths, thoſe holy and righteous commands, thoſe great and precious promiſes, thoſe aſtoniſhing and dreadfull threatnings, conteined and expreſſed, as well in Tranſlations, as in the Originalls to be of greateſt pregnancie and power both to diſcover and aſſert their royall Parentage, and deſcent from God. *If our Goſpel* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *be hid* (1. undiſcern'd, or not apprehended to come from God) *it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of them, which*

*Which beleeve not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them* [a]. In which words he clearly implies, that there is ſuch a glorious and heavenly luſtre, or brightneſſe of divine excellencie, ſitting (as it were) upon, and ſhining from, the face of the Goſpel, that men, who are not *bewitched* by the devil, that is, who are not through the juſt judgement of God upon them for former ſins deprived by the devil even of the naturall uſe or actings of their reaſons, judgements, and underſtandings, about ſpirituall things, cannot but ſee and acknowledge, manifeſt characters and impreſſions of the grace, holineſſe, love, and wiſedome of God in it; and conſequently be hereby drawn to imbrace it. Therefore

[a] 2 Cor 4 3,4.

Seventhly and laſtly, the true and proper *foundation of Chriſtian Religion*, is not inke and paper, not any book, or books, not any writing, or writings whatſoever, whether *Tranſlations*, or *Originalls*; but that ſubſtance of matter, thoſe gracious counſells of God concerning the ſalvation of the world by Jeſus Chriſt, which indeed are repreſented, and declared, both in Tranſlations, and Originalls, but are eſſentially and really diſtinct from both, and no waies, for their natures and beings, depending on either of them. A bargain agreed upon, and concluded, in point of tranſaction, between two men, whether the tenour or particular of it be ever drawn up in writing, or ſubſcribed by the parties, or no, is yet for the nature of it, and matter of tranſaction, a compleat and true bargain; the writing, if any be made in reference to it, onely declareth the nature or tenour of the bargain, which was in reality, and compleatneſſe of being, before the writing; and conſequently the writing can be no part of it: In like manner, the gracious and good pleaſure of God concerning the ſalvation of the world, had in all the particulars of it, compleatneſſe of being, *viz.* in God himſelf, long before any branch or part of it was imparted unto the world by any writing whatſoever; yea and was ſavingly imparted, and revealed unto the world, 1. By immediate inſpiration from God unto ſome men, 2. by word of mouth, from theſe, unto many others, long before any part of it was ordered by God to be ſet down in writing. So that no book, or writing whatſoever, is either in whole, or in part, this *Word*, or will of God; and conſequently

ly, *no foundation of Christian Religion*; unleſſe we ſhall ſuppoſe and make ſome other *foundation of* this *Religion*, beſides *the Word of God*.

This concluſion is further evidenced by this conſideration. The *foundation of true Religion*, is not changed, varieth not from it ſelf, by any intervalls, or diſtances of times, but like Chriſt himſelf, is one *and the ſame, yeſterday, and to day, and for ever*[a]. Now certain it is, that there was a time, where neither Originalls, nor Tranſlations of Scripture, were *the foundation of Religion*, but ſomewhat beſides; therefore as certain it is, that neither are they the *foundation of Religion*, at this day. That there was a time, when neither of them was any *foundation of Religion*, is evident from what hath been already ſaid, and is generally acknowledged. There was a true *Religion* in the world, all along that great ſpace or tract of time (two thouſands years and more) which had gone over the head of the world, before *Moſes* was called and imployed by God, to lay the corner ſtone of that Divine fabrique of Scripture, which is now (and ſo hath been of a long time) perfected; unleſſe we will deny, *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Iſaak*, and *Jacob*, to have been *truly Religious*, with many others, who lived within that compaſſe of time, and have teſtimony from the Scriptures themſelves, that they were godly and faithfull. Yea the Goſpel it ſelf, and thoſe further and rich diſcoveries of himſelf, which God reſerved for a glorious gift to be preſented (as it were) by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf unto the world at his coming into it, were effectually preached, and beleeved by many unto ſalvation, and Chriſtian Religion fully eſtabliſhed in the world, before any part of the new Teſtament was written. The Evangeliſt *Matthew* is generally conceived (eſpecially by ancient writers) to have been the firſt pen-man, that God was pleas'd to uſe in penning the new Teſtament; and that it was about eight years after *Chriſts* aſcention, before he put forth his hand to this work. And yet who doubts but that *the foundation of Chriſtian Religion* was laid before this in the world; yea and much of this *Religion* built upon it? Therefore (queſtionleſſe) no writing whatſoever whether *Tranſlations*, or *Originalls*, are *the foundation of Chriſtian Religion*.

[a] Heb. 13. 8.

There

There are other reaſons, and theſe in abundance, very obvious, and near at hand, of an undeniable eviction of truth in this concluſion; but the conſidering Reader cannot lightly by this, ſtand in need of any thing more to be ſaid for his ſatisfaction in the point.

If it be objected and ſaid; but what ground or *foundation* can a weak and unlearned man have, to build his Faith or *Religion* upon, if he may not ſafely build it upon ſuch a *Tranſlation* of the Scriptures, as he underſtands? And of what uſe and benefit are *Tranſlations*, yea or *Originalls* themſelves, if men may not build their *Religion* on them, as upon a ſure and ſafe *foundation?*

To the former part of the Queſtion, I anſwer, 1. That if he who is able to read and underſtand the Scriptures onely in his own native tongue, hath no foundation to build his Faith or *Religion* upon, but onely that *Tranſlation* of Scripture, which he is able to read and underſtand; then he that is altogether book-leſſe and illiterate, and not able to read the Scriptures, though tranſlated into his own language, hath no foundation at all, for his. The reaſon of the conſequence is clear; becauſe to him that cannot read Engliſh, an Engliſh Bible is as much a *ſealed*, or uſeleſſe *book*, in reſpect of his perſonall reading it, as a Bible Tranſlated into a ſtrange language, is to him, who is able to read the Engliſh tongue, and none other. But certain it is, that many Engliſh, both men and women, who cannot read Engliſh, and conſequently not an Engliſh Bible, finde notwithſtanding a ſufficient foundation whereon to build their Faith and Religion, being ſound Beleevers, and truly *Religious*. Therefore they alſo, who are able both to read and underſtand the Engliſh Tranſlation, and no other, either have, or may have, I am ſure ought to have, another foundation, on which to build their Religion, beſides their Engliſh Tranſlation; *viz.* that Truth of God, which is indifferently contained and expreſſed both in Originalls, and other Tranſlations alſo, beſides the Engliſh; and on which many build their Religion, and that ſafely, who neither know, nor depend upon, either the one, or the other, I mean neither upon *Originalls*, nor *Tranſlations*, either in one language or other.

Secondly, If unlearned men amongſt us have no foundation to build their *Religion* upon, but onely the *Engliſh Tranſlation*; then *the foundation of their Religion* muſt unavoidably, and of neceſſity be, that which is the product and fruit of the wiſedome, learning, and underſtanding of men. For certain it is that all Tranſlations of Scriptures in what language ſoever, are none other; the Holy Ghoſt never intereſſing himſelf, at leaſt in a way of infallibility, or any other wiſe, then according to the line and meaſure of his uſuall aſſiſtance of faithfull miniſters in the courſe of their preaching, about any *Tranſlation* of the *Scriptures*. Therefore certainly ſuch men (I mean, that are unlearned) have another foundation, beſides the Engliſh Tranſlation, whereon to build themſelves in point of Religion, even the infallible and unqueſtionable Truth of God; which was a foundation of like import to many unlearned ones, before the Engliſh Tranſlation was brought forth, or heard of in the world.

If it be yet urged; yea but is not this Truth of God, which you acknowledge to be ſo juſt and ſure a *foundation of Religion*, ſomewhat at leaſt, or a part of the *Engliſh Tranſlation*, inaſmuch as you grant, that it is conteined and expreſſed in it. And if ſo, then is this *Tranſlation*, at leaſt in reſpect of a part of it, or of ſomewhat in it, a ſure and ſafe *foundation of Religion*. To this I anſwer,

Firſt, By conceſſion; that that Truth of God, which I aſſert for the true *foundation of Religion*, is contained and expreſſed (though it be with ſome diſadvantage) in the *Engliſh Tranſlation*. But

Secondly, I anſwer further (by way of exception) though that truth of God, is indeed the *true foundation of Religion*, which is contained and expreſſed in the *Engliſh Tranſlation*, yet it follows not from hence, that therefore it is any part of it. Wine or other liquor may be contain'd, preſented, or held forth in a cup; yet hereby it never the more becomes any part of the cup, which contain's and hold's it forth.

If it be yet ſaid; yea but is not the ſenſe, meaning and import, of a writing, or book, a part, yea the moſt materiall part, of either? And is not the *Truth of God* you ſpeak of, the true and genuine ſenſe, meaning, and import of the *Engliſh Tranſlation*?

and

and ſo by conſequence, a part of it? I anſwere:

1. There is not altogether the ſame reaſon or conſideration of Tranſlations of books, or writings in any kinde, wherein onely the ſenſe and meaning of another is expreſſed (or at leaſt intended ſo to be) which there is of books containing onely the judgement, ſenſe, and apprehenſions of him, who is the Authour. The union between the words, and ſenſe or meaning in the later kinde of books, is more formall and entire, then in the former: and conſequently the ſenſe or meaning contained in them, may more properly be called *a part* of them, then in the other. There is a kinde of union between the cup, and the wine that is put into it, and contained in it, as well as there is between the body and ſoul, in the perſon of a man; but yet the former union doth not, of the two things united, conſtitute any thing ſo intirely one, as the later doth. The body and ſoul, by means of their union, conſtitute a third thing differing from them both, which is naturally, compleatly, and eſſentially one (*viz.* the perſon of a man) of which, as well the body, as the ſoul, and again, the ſoul, as well as the body, may properly be called, *parts*. But no ſuch third thing, *viz.* which is naturally and intirely one, is raiſed by the other union, which is between the wine and the cup: nor can the wine be called properly a part of any third thing, conſtituted or made of it, and the cup, in conjunction with it. The reaſon of the difference is, becauſe this later union, between the wine and the cup, is of a lower nature, more extrinſecall and looſe, then to combine the two things whereunto it relateth, into one and the ſame intire body, or ſubſtance. In like manner, when a man inditeth and frameth a book of his own, wherein he onely expreſſeth his own ſenſe, conceptions, or notions of things; there is a more genuine, naturall, and intire union, between the ſenſe and the words, then is between the ſenſe, and the words of a book Tranſlated. The words and ſenſe in the former kinde of writing, proceed joyntly and with an intireneſſe of union, out of one and the ſame underſtanding, much after the ſame manner, wherein the ſoul and the body come in perſonall union out of the womb. But in the Tranſlation of a book it is otherwiſe; the ſenſe, matter, and import of this, is profeſſedly taken or borrowed from another book or

writing, which came from another understanding, not his, who is the translatour; and consequently, is but a stranger (comparatively) to those words, or that language, into which it is translated. From which difference it cometh to passe, that the sense of a Translation, or book translated out of another, cannot so properly be called a part of this book, as the sense of a book, wholly rais'd, words, and matter, out of the same judgement and understanding, may. But

2. Suppose it be granted, that a part, or somewhat of our *English Translation*, is a just and safe *foundation of Religion*, as *viz.* the sense and meaning of it (as hath been said) yet in a formall consideration, that is, as it is a part of this *Translation*, it is not, it ought not so to be. For if it be in this respect a *foundation of Religion*, *viz* because it is a part of the *English Translation*, then the reason, judgement, faithfullnesse and skill in languages in the Translatour, are the principall ingredients into the *foundation of Religion*. For that sense, matter, and import of things expressed in this Translation, though they be (for the most part) the Truth, or Truths of God, yet were they not brought hither (I mean, put into, or made part of this Translation) simply as they are the Truth, or Truths of God, but onely as they were conceived and apprehended for such, by the Translatour, and supposed to be the true and genuine sense of the Originalls, from whence they were conveyed by him, and put into the English tongue. So that whosoever shall build or *found* his *Religion* upon the *English Translation*, simply as such, as a Translation (which properly import's onely the work, or atchievement of a man) builds this important fabrique upon the sandy foundations, of the knowledge, skill, wisedome, and faithfullnesse of men. But he that builds upon the Truth and counsells of God concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, whether expressed in the said *Translation*, or in the *Originalls*, or whersoever, builds his *Religion* (like the *wise builder*) *upon the Rock*, and upon such a *foundation* which shall not be shaken; whether the English Translation stand, or fall. And this for Answer, to the former part of the Question propounded.

To the later, which questioneth the use of *Translations*, in case unlearned

unlearned men may not safely make them the *foundation* of their *Religion*, I answer; first (in the generall) that the use and benefit of them is exceeding great, and that severall waies, though that use (which is indeed an abuse of them, and which makes them of equall authority with the incorruptible word of God it self) be denied unto them. Yea I conceive that that miraculous and glorious gift of tongues, given to the Apostles in the day of Pentecost, (*Acts* 2.) though of a most gracious and very high concernment unto the world, yet was not of that rich and blessed accommodation to the generality of man-kinde, which Translations of Scripture are. For (to descend to particulars in the second place) there are these ensuing considerations (amongst others,) wherein Translations of Scripture, are great benefactours unto the world.

1. They exhibit, and represent the great things of God and of Jesus Christ concerning the salvation of men, unto the mindes and consciences of weak and unlearned men, whose education, condition, and course of life, have not afforded unto them so much clerk-ship, or scholar-like learning, as to be able to reade with understanding, any more tongues or languages, then that wherein they were born. By means of which representation by Translations, they have opportunity, as oft as they shall desire, to exercise themselves with more advantage and facilitie, either in the meditation, or further study of them.

2. Men who have been bowed down so neer unto the earth in their education, that they are not able to read so much as their own native language, may yet have more, and more frequent communion and converse with the great things of their peace, being brought into a language which they understand, then they could have had opportunity to enjoy, had they still been confined to the Originals. Many can reade the Scriptures unto them in their mother tongue, who are not able to reade, much lesse to interpret, the Originall languages.

3. A Translation, if it suffers not, either through the unskillfullnesse, or unfaithfullnesse, of the Translators, doth not only convey the precise sence and import of the originall text to the Readers understanding, but serve instead of a brief Commentary or explanation upon it.

4. When there is *a famine of the Word of God*, in respect of the publike teaching and ministry of it, or when men are deprived of liberty or opportunity to partake of it in that ordinance, the company of a faithfull Translation of the Scriptures, may be improved to a comfortable supply of these spirituall inconveniences and defects, by the generality of men, who are not capable of the originals.

5. A good and approved Translation in the hand of a plain, and yet considering man (a frequent conjunction in these daies) serves him instead of a touchstone to try the Doctrine of his Teacher, whether it be *gold and silver*, or hey and stubble: and so may be a means (through the blessing of God) to deliver his precious soul, out of the snare of those, who corrupt and make merchandise of the word of God; a seed of men, which Satan of late hath sowne very thick in the field of God.

6. Many Ministers and Teachers themselves stand in awe of Translations in the hand of their hearers, and people committed unto them, lest they should be reproved and censured by them, in case they approve not themselves such *Workmen, Who need not be ashamed.* The *Bereans searched the Scriptures daily, Whether things were so, or no*, as *Paul* and *Silas* had taught them [a]: which they could not have done, had they not had that precious advantage of the Scriptures in a language which they understood.

[a] Acts 17.11.

7. (And lastly,) Many thousands of souls, who cannot fetch the waters of life from the fountains themselves (I mean the Originals) nor drink here: may yet drink freely of them, and quench their thirst, when they are derived and brought from hence to their hearts and understandings, by the pipes and conveyances of sound Translations. Yea and by acquainting themselves with the Scriptures privately, and in their own houses, they may be more apprehensive and capable of the publike administration of them, in the house of God.

These particulars might easily have been enlarged, and the great weight and importance of them all respectively, more fully opened, urged, and insisted upon; yea many more of equall concernment with these, might readily have been added; but these I judge abundantly sufficient, to vindicate the necessity, use, benefit, and blessing of Translations unto the world, though no

no *foundation of Religion* be made of them.

By this time I truſt the Reader will acknowledge, that labour enough (if not complain, that more then enough) hath been expended, in waſhing that, which was clean before; and in making ſtrait, that which was no waies crooked. But it is no rarity amongſt the ſtories and paſſages of the world, to hear, or ſee, juſtice put upon her juſtification. If I did not know *Satan* to be an *Ethiopian*, one that *cannot change his skin*, I ſhould not fear *the returning of the clouds after the rain*; I mean, the bearing of the reproach of a man denying the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, any more.

I cannot but here take notice, of ſome other lying and calumniating ſpirits abroad in the world againſt me, before the date of the Commiſſion, which this laſt and fouleſt of the brood, obtained, to enter the mouthes and tongues of men. Yet I perceive that that great Father, of whom we ſpake before (*Auguſtine* by name) in whom *the grace of God wrought mightily*, for the advancement of the Name and Kingdom of *Chriſt*, in the world, was haunted and moleſted with many more of theſe unclean ſpirits, then yet I have been. For he, in the forementioned Tract, found himſelf *neceſſitated, partly to mollifie his accuſers and traducers, partly to rectifie the apprehenſions of thoſe, in whoſe ears thoſe miſ-repreſentations of him had ſounded*, to vindicate and purge himſelf, about no fewer then *ſixteen* ſeverall points, wherein he had ſuffered diſparagement and diſgrace by the tongues of ſome, as an erroneous man [a]. But *Hell* it ſelf, though *broke looſe* [b], can (it ſeems) out of all my own writings, and other mens, concerning me and my Doctrine, finde and forge together but four particulars, for which I muſt be made to *take up my croſſe, and follow Chriſt*, as an evil doer: and two of the four, have been already in the precedent part of theſe papers, either fully juſtified for truth, or elſe evicted of falſhood, in point of charge.

[a] Unde ne hujus querelæ inveniretur occaſio, neceſſarium convenientiq; credidimus, ut ſive ad calumniantium animos mitigandos, ſive ad eos, quorum auribus tale quid inſonuit inſtruendos, quantum adjuvante domino fieri potuit, plenè lucideq; pandamus, quid de perverſis definitionibus judicem. Propoſitis ergo ſingillatim ſexdecim articulis, ſub unoquoq; eorum ſenſus noſtri & fidei, quàm contrà Pelagianos ex Apoſtolicæ ſedis Authoritate defendimus, verba ponamus, &c. Aug. ad Artic. ſibi falſo impoſitos. Tom 7.

[b] *An idle Pamphlet lately publiſhed under the title of* Hell broke looſe.

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The first of the four is, that I hold, *that naturall men may do such things, as whereunto God hath by way of promise annexed Grace, and acceptation.* A most dangerous errour! and of as sad a consequence, as that which was charged upon *Paul*, when his adversaries accused him for teaching, *That they were no gods, which were made with hands. This Paul* (say they) *hath perswaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands* [c]. For (doubtlesse) men, are *naturall* men, before they are spirituall, or supernaturall; and spirituall or supernaturall they cannot be made, but by beleeving; and unto beleeving, we all confesse, that *God hath promised grace and acceptation.* Therefore unlesse it be possible, that *naturall* men may beleeve; it is unpossible that ever they should become spirituall: And if it be possible that they may beleeve, then *may they doe such things, whereunto God hath by way of promise, annexed grace and acceptation.* And if this be an errour, *That naturall men may doe such things as whereunto God hath by way of promise annexed Grace and Acceptation,* Presbytery her self, in many of her most Orthodox children (as she counteth Orthodox) as well in the present Assembly, as without, is partakresse of the infection; as I have expresly shewed from their own pens, and under their own names subscribed, elsewhere[a]. But where did *Hell* meet with this opinion? or from what hand did he receive it, as held, or taught by me? Doubtlesse there is no such Doctrine as this (to my best remembrance) asserted by me in any of my writings: nor is it any where to be found upon my skore that I know of, but in the retinue of many more notorious untruths, I mean in a Pamphlet, set forth somewhile since by a young man, one *Sa. Lane*: unlesse (haply) *Gangrena* also in some or other of her *diabolicall indicles* (as *Austin* calls them) spit this poison too. But unto the said Pamphlet, an Answer had been given long since, had I not judged the ingagement farre beneath the consequence of those other imployments, which have taken up my time, since that occasion. But till I shall have an opportunity, to give a more full account unto the world, of my sence and judgement about the freedom, or bondage rather, of the will, and power of nature, in order to salvation; I desire to declare and publish this in brief, as my cleer judgement and belief in the point: That no man since the fall, ever

[c] Acts 19.26.

[a] *Cretensis.* § 16. p. 20, 21, 22.

ever yet did, or ever will beleeve unto ſalvation, but only by the aſſiſtance of the ſpeciall Grace of God. If this be an opinion heterodox, I confeſſe I am not Orthodox in the point.

The ſecond Errour or Hereſie, which the ſaid *Hell*, (being *broke looſe*) fooliſhly forgeth, and falſly fathereth upon me, is, That π *credere, Faith in a proper ſence, is imputed to juſtification, and not Chriſts Righteouſneſſe.* Firſt, If *Hell* can finde any ſuch expreſſion, as τὸ *credere*, in any of my writings, or can prove, that I ever us'd any ſuch expreſſion in any of my Sermons, or in any conference with any man upon the point of juſtification, or otherwiſe, to expreſſe mine own judgement herein, I will ſay that *Hell* can doe more then *Heaven*: for certain I am, that neither God, nor his holy Angels, can either finde in the one, or prove in the other any ſuch thing. Secondly, Whether I hold, *that Chriſts righteouſneſſe is not imputed in Juſtification*, (except haply in ſome uncouth and Apocryphall ſence) let the 8th Section of the third Chapter of the ſecond part of my Treatiſe concerning Juſtification, anſwer for me. Here I expreſſe my ſelf thus: *In this ſence likewiſe, as well the habituall holineſſe of Chriſts perſon, as the morall righteouſneſſe of his life, may be ſaid to be imputed to thoſe that beleeve in him.* To ſay, that I deny the imputation of *Chriſts* righteouſneſſe in juſtification, becauſe I deny it in a barbarous, heterodox, irrationall, incongruous ſence, whenas I affirm it in a ſence regular, and conſiſtent; is a fruit, either of ſimplicity, or malignitie in the higheſt. Thirdly (and laſtly) as Orthodox and learned Divines, as any Presbytery numbreth amongſt all her children, are ſo farre from making it, either hereticall or erroneous, to affirm, that *Faith is in a proper ſence imputed in Juſtification*, that they doe not only make it equally Orthodox, and of the ſame import with the other expreſſion, I mean of a metonymicall or improper ſence, and that by evidence of demonſtration, but plainly declare their judgements for it *.

* Yea even thoſe of us who maintain Faith to be taken in a proper ſence, and not by a metonymicall trope, as well in any one of thoſe phraſes, as in another, doe not ſay any more then may well be juſtified; nor doe they differ at all in Doctrine, ſo farre as I am able to conceive (and I love not to make differences where I apprehend none) that ſay the one, or the other. Mr *Tho Gataker*. Shadowes without ſubſtance. *p* 54.

So here in the fore-mentioned propoſitions [we are juſtified by Faith, we are ſaved by Faith, Faith is imputed to righteouſneſſe] the word Faith is taken for Faith, as the word hope, for hope, in the like, &c. Idem ibid. *p* 56.

As for the reports of ſome others, who defile their tongues and conſciences together, by charging me behinde my back, that I make Faith without an object to juſtifie, that I make Faith to juſtifie as it is an act, that I make a bare belief of the Goſpel to juſtifie, that I deſire not to be found in Chriſts righteouſneſſe; with many ſuch ridiculous forgeries as theſe, I look upon them onely as the eſſaies of Satan, or that ſmall game which he had rather play (as the proverb is) then ſit out. For my belief and hope in the moſt important buſineſſe of my Juſtification before God, I cannot expreſſe it either with more ſatisfaction to my ſelf, or (as I conceive) unto others, then in the tenour of the Apoſtles own words: I deſire, and hope, *to be found in him* [Chriſt] *not having mine own righteouſneſſe, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſſe which is of God by faith*[a].

[a] Phil. 3. 9.

The third and fourth errours (very ſimply and erroneouſly ſo called) which *Hell* chargeth me with, have been already attoned, and perfectly reconciled unto the Truth, in the former paſſages of this diſcourſe. However, let us have the ſound of them, that ſo we may perceive with what fidelitie, and skill, he that is the Collectour for *Hell*, hath performed his Office, in making the Extraction of them out of my pen.

The former of the two, tenoureth thus: *That as it is no foundation of Chriſtian Religion, to beleeve that the Engliſh Scriptures, or that volume, or volume of books called the Bible, are the Word of God: ſo neither thoſe that are learned, nor thoſe that are unlearned, can know that the Originall Hebrew or Greek copies are the Word of God, upon any better terms of aſſurance, then the teſtimonie, common report, or Authority of men.* Doth the man repreſent it as an errour, to hold, that the act of a man, as *viz.* his *beleeving the Engliſh Scriptures to be the Word of God*, is *no foundation of Chriſtian Religion?* The Lord in mercy ſend his Church better Tutours and Teachers then theſe.

The later, is but another of the ſame, being this: *That the holding the Scripture, i. either the Originall or Greek copies (out of which the Engliſh Bible is tranſlated) or the Engliſh Bible to be the Word of God, can with no tollerable pretext, or colour, be called a foundation of Chriſtian Religion.* Miſerable is the Religi-

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on of theſe men, whoſe foundation is, either their own, or the act of ſome other man. But by the way, neither of theſe poſitions are mine, nor can they by any regular conſequence or deduction, be infer'd from that diſcourſe of mine, to which the Collectour pretends in his margent. Howſoever, I preſume I have given a fair and ſatisfactory account, how, and how farre, and in what ſenſe, I both hold, and denie, as well the Engliſh Scriptures, as the Originals, to be the word of God.

Concerning the power of the civill Magiſtrate, I have in my Epiſtle, before my late diſcourſe, intituled *Hagiomaſtix* diſplaied, *&c.* not onely argued and aſſerted the lawfullneſſe of it, but the neceſſity alſo; yea and ſhewed the benefit and bleſſing of it unto the world; yea and further have endeavoured with all my might to convince the errour and ſin of thoſe, who ſhall refuſe ſubjection to it.

I know nothing more, for matter of opinion, wherein I ſuffer from the world as an erroneous and unſound man, except it be concerning the eſtate and condition of the ſoul, between the time of death and the Reſurrection. My judgement herein hath been unduly repreſented from a Sermon of mine (the principal ingagement whereof was to demonſtrate the immortality of the ſoul) as if I held, that the ſoul ſleeps untill the Reſurrection: Whereas, as to this particular, I onely taught (with ſome little inlargement of my ſelf in the proof and proſecution of them.) 1. That the Scriptures very frequently repreſent the ſtate and condition of *the perſon of a man*, between the time of his death and reſurrection, by the *metaphor*, or ſimilitude of ſleep, and 2. That the Scriptures are very ſilent concerning the particular eſtate or imployments of the ſoul, during this ſpace: and that onely in the generall, they ſpeak them *bleſſed* (if the ſouls of thoſe who *dye in the Lord*,) If there be either errour or Hereſie, in either of theſe aſſertions; I ſhall upon conviction, either retract, or contentedly ſuffer, whether in name, or otherwiſe, as an Erroneous or Hereticall perſon.

Thus, Reader, I have given thee a ſincere and cordiall account, and that with as much cleerneſſe and perſpicuity, as my intended brevity would admit, of what I hold in point of judgement, about thoſe Doctrines, or particular ſubjects in Di-

vinitie, wherein the tongues of many have magnified themſelves ſo much againſt me, as a man holding rotten tenets, and in that reſpect, dangerous to be heard, dangerous to be converſed with. And as *Paul* did not ſo much *deſire a gift* from the *Philippians*, *as fruit that might abound to their account* [a]; ſo neither have I drawn up this brief vindication or explication of my ſelf in matters objected againſt me, ſo much to free my ſelf from the clamours, hard ſayings, and thoughts of men, as to free and deliver them from ſuch a courſe and practiſe, which I am certain will, without repentance, be matter of ſad *account* unto them in that day. For I am able, *through Chriſt ſtrengthning me, to be abaſed* in name and credit, as well as otherwiſe. Diſhonour, diſparagements, defamations, *&c.* are the element wherein I have liv'd and my *ſoul proſpered* (through the goodneſſe of God) theſe many years. The yoke is little or no offence unto me, my neck having been ſo long accuſtomed to it. Yea I look upon my ſufferings *for righteouſneſſe ſake* (and ſufferings from men upon any other terms, I fear none) as the beſt earnings I can make of mortality. So that did I not conceive it as a duty lying upon me, or were it not otherwiſe a practice very ſutable to my ſpirit, to ſeek the everlaſting peace and comforts of men by every good way and means, and conſequently by removing, as far as I am able, every ſtumbling ſtone out of their way; I ſhould have been very faintly drawn into this ingagement of a vindication; my name being better able to bear the burden of my reproches, then my ſoul to want the benefit and bleſſing of them. *Bleſſed are ye, when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evill againſt you falſly for my ſake. Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets that were before you*, Matth. 5. 11. 12.

[a] Phil. 4. 17.

For a cloſe of this preſent diſcourſe, I ſhall make a brief preſentment of the ſubſtance or heads of thoſe Demonſtrations, by the full explication and diſcuſſion wherof of late, in the ſtanding courſe of my Miniſtry, I fully, and (as I ſuppoſe) above all contradiction, evinced the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, their Parentage and deſcent from God.

The arguments or demonſtrations, by which I aſſerted that Bleſſed concluſion we ſpeak of, were firſt, and in the generall, divided

divided into two kindes. The firſt, we called, *Intrinſecall*; the later, *Extrinſecall.* By the former, we meant ſuch conſiderations or arguments, which are found in, or (as it were) inhering in, the body of the Scriptures themſelves. By the later, ſuch, which, though found out of the Scriptures, yet have a potent tendencie and import to advance the ſame Truth with the former, in the judgements and conſciences of men. Thoſe which we called Intrinſecall, we ſubdivided; 1. Into ſuch, which reſpect the penning, phraſe, language, and manner of indighting, or frameing the Scriptures. 2. Into ſuch, which reſpect the matter, or ſubſtance of them: both which kindes of argument, we looked upon, as ſo many divine characters printed and ſtamped (as it were) upon the body or face of the Scriptures, bewraying their Originall and deſcent from God. The later ſort of arguments, which we called *Extrinſecall*, we likewiſe ſubdivided, 1. Into ſuch remarkeable paſſages or acts of Divine Providence, whereby God plainly own's the Scriptures as his, and from himſelf. 2. Into ſuch either doings, or ſayings of men, which are ſo far confederate with thoſe Providences of God, as to joyn in teſtimonie with them on the behalf of the Scriptures.

The Arguments drawn from the penning, phraſe, frame, and manner of inditing the Scriptures (which were the firſt kinde of thoſe we called *Intrinſecall*) were theſe following (in number, eight.)

Firſt, The nature, qualitie, and manner of the ſtile or phraſe, wherein the Scriptures are written, being ſo emphatically and ſignally different from the tenour of all humane writings whatſoever, that have yet come to light in the world, give a clear and pregnant teſtimony unto them, that they come from God. The Apoſtle *Paul* atteſteth this teſtimony, withall aſſigning the ground or reaſon of ſuch a difference, when he ſaith; *Which things* (ſpeaking of the matter or ſubſtance of things contained in the Scriptures, and particularly the Goſpel) *we alſo ſpeak* (1. utter, and publiſh unto the world, whether by writing, or word of mouth) *not in the words, which mans Wiſedome teacheth, but which the holy Ghoſt teacheth, comparing* [or rather, ſuiting, or fitting, συγκρίνοντες, adaptantes, or, coaptantes] *ſpirituals with ſpirituals* (for ſo it is in the originall, πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς 1 Cor. 2. 13.

πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνοντες) 1. matter, or things which for their nature and ſubſtance are *ſpirituall*, with words and phraſes which are *ſpirituall* alſo, and ſo ſuitable to them. It is (I confeſſe) very difficult and hard, or rather indeed unpoſſible, for a man fully to explicate the differences between the Scripture phraſe and expreſſion, and the language and phraſe uſed in other writings. But as the palate or ſenſe of taſting in men, clearly taſts and diſcerns the difference of taſts between meats and meats, of which difference notwithſtanding (at leaſt in many particulars) they are not able to give an account in words: in like manner the intellectuall διανοητικον or principle of reliſhing in the ſoul, is capable of a diſcerning and diſtinguiſhing ſuch differences between words and words, expreſſion and expreſſion, which the tongue of a mans underſtanding is not able to deſcribe to the apprehenſion of another. And as the fruit of the vine, the grape, is eaſie to be diſcerned from the fruit of the thorn; and the fruit of the figtree, from any thing that comes from the thiſtle; ſo in reaſon, thoſe words, that ſtile, and manner of ſpeech, which are extraordinarily and in reference to a very particular and ſpeciall occaſion, taught by that great maſter, the holy Ghoſt, muſt needs be conceived, as eaſily diſtinguiſhable, from the beſt and moſt refined phraſe or ſtile that can proceed from the wiſedome of men. The difference we proſecuted and opened ſo far, as to render intelligent men fully ſenſible and apprehenſive of ſome particularities in it: but we judge the diſcourſe too long to be here inſerted.

Secondly, The ſpirituality, the admirable workmanſhip, appearing upon a narrow and cloſe inſpection, in the joints of the Scriptures, I mean in the connexions and dependencies, which one paſſage hath with, and upon another; and one ſentence and period, upon another; leadeth us beyond all that is called *man*, to finde the Authour and workman of them. There is no ſuch aſpect between the conjoin'd ſentences in other Authours or writings, which is in this. It is ſomewhat hard to expreſſe this difference alſo (as was ſaid in the former point) to weak apprehenſions; eſpecially to ſuch, as are not in ſome good meaſure acquainted with other writers, and have not taken knowledge, how, or after what manner their ſayings and ſentences hang upon

on another. The Apoſtle himſelf was at a like loſſe upon a like occaſion or concurrence of circumſtances; I mean, how well to expreſſe himſelf in matters of a ſpirituall, and ſomewhat unuſuall importance, to capacities unacquainted with ſuch things. *Of whom* (ſaith he, ſpeaking of *Chriſt*) *We have many things to ſay, and hard to be uttered*; δυσερμήνευτος ὁ λόγος, *i.* hard to be interpreted, meaning, to be fitted in the utterance or expreſſion of them to your capacities, or underſtandings, *ſeeing ye are dull of hearing*: or rather ſlow, or ſloathfull [νωθροὶ] *i.* backward and averſe from taking pains that you may be able to hear with underſtanding. But this by the way. To the point in hand I ſay, that there is no ſuch contexture or complication of ſentences in other writings, as thoſe that are found from place to place in the Scriptures; I mean of ſuch an exquiſite, cloſe, and profound contrivance; or which ſtrike and affect the apprehenſions and underſtandings of men with that ſtrength and delight of contentment, when they are cleerly ſeen and apprehended. As there is a great difference or variety in the skill and play of wraſtlers, ſome cloſe with, and faſten upon their adverſaries one way, take hold of one limb, and ſome on another: So the ſayings and ſentences of the Scriptures take hold of their fellows, and faſten one upon another by an art or method peculiar to themſelves, and which other writings know not. Look what manner of difference may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have been between the workmanſhip of *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, whom God *fill'd with the Spirit of God, in Wiſedom, and in underſtanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of Workmanſhip to deviſe cunning Works, to work in gold, and in ſilver, and in braſſe, in ſtones, and in timber*[a], (as the Scripture ſpeaks) and between the workmanſhip of ordinary Artificers in the like materials; the like (yea, and farre greater) difference is obvious enough to be ſeen and apprehended, in the twining and twiſting together of ſentences by the finger of the holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures, and in thoſe which are wrought by the hand of humane wiſedom and art in other writings. Not but that theſe latter are (many times) rationall enough, and ſavour of thoſe diſcurſive principles, which are the excellency of man above other creatures; but they are nothing ſo ſpirituall, *i.* the reaſon which is in them, doth not require ſo much conſideration

Heb. 5. 11.

[a] Exod. 31. 2, 4. &c.

deration of things, ſo much contention and ſtreyning of the powers of the minde and underſtanding to come at it, nor yet the knowledge of ſo many things beſides to reach and comprehend it, as that which lieth in the Scripture dependencies doth. Nor are they ſo comprehenſive of wiſedom as theſe: *i.* the content or proportion of matter in them is nothing ſo great and large, as it is in theſe; they are nothing ſo laden with treaſure as theſe; yea they are light and empty (in compariſon:) You have many times great ſecrets, and much myſteriouſneſſe of wiſedom laid very cloſe, and artificially couch'd in the joints of the Scriptures; whereas in other Authours there is no ſuch thing. It were eaſie to inſtance in particulars: but how then ſhould our deſigne of brevity ſtand?

Thirdly, Another particular relating to the manner and carriage of the Scriptures, which alſo evinceth their royall deſcent with an high hand, is a certain Authoritativeneſſe, or God-like ſpeaking unto the creature from place to place: a ſhort, ſharp, and ſevere turning off of things and perſons; characters and forms of ſpeech not to be parallell'd in other Writers, and which cannot reaſonably be looked upon but as the prints or footſteps of a Divine Majeſty. Of this kinde of expreſſion is that of our Saviour, *Matth.* 13.9. repeated again *ver.* 43. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*: and again, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*: and elſewhere again and again: *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*. It is as a warning Peece from Heaven let off in thunder, to awaken and rouſe the world out of their ſecurity, even Kings and Princes, and the greateſt Monarchs and Potentates of the earth, to attend with all their might and all their ſtrength to the great things of the Goſpel. The ſaying of *Auſtin* is memorable: *The Scripture ſo ſpeaketh, that with the height of it, it laughs proud and lofty-ſpirited men to ſcorn, With the depth of it, it terrifies thoſe who with attention look into it: With the truth of it, it feeds men of greateſt knowledge and underſtanding: and with the affability and ſweetneſſe of it, it nouriſheth babes and ſucklings.* It is ſaid, that the people *were aſtonied at Chriſts doctrine*: the reaſon is given thus: *For he taught with authority* [or, *as one having authority.*] *and not as the Scribes* [b]. So the Scriptures teach the world with a majeſtick *authority*, which many times ſtrikes the hearts

Scriptura ſic loquitur, ut altitudine ſuperbos irrideat, profunditate attentos terreat, veritate magnos paſcat, affabilitate parvos nutriat.

[b] Mat. 7. 28, 29.

hearts of men with fear and aſtoniſhment, and not like unto the writings of other men. And indeed ſuch προσφωνημάτα, the laying of ſuch high charges and deep ingagements upon the world to hearken and to attend, as thoſe lately mentioned from the Scriptures, would be in other writings, but like *new pieces put upon old garments* (in our Saviours Parable) they would be ridiculous and importune, altogether unſutable to the arguments or ſubjects handled in them. For let the tenour, weight, and importance of ſuch awakenings and addreſſments unto the world, as this, *Let him that hath ears to hear, hear*, be but ſeriouſly conſidered, and they will be found to hold a due and full proportion with things of the moſt glorious and tranſcendent importance, ſuch as is the ſubject matter handled in the Scriptures: he that ſhall ingage the world to hearken and attend at ſuch a rate, as this Trumpet, *Let him that hath ears to hear, hear*, ſounds diſtinctly in his ears, had need have matters of everlaſting concernment and import to ſpeak unto the world; and ſuch (we know) he ſpeaketh, whoever he be that ſpeaketh in, or out of, the Scriptures, unto the children of men. But the arguments and things handled and managed in other Authours, who pretend not to build upon the Scriptures, being but either τὰ βιωτικὰ, things appertaining to this preſent life, and ſo of inferiour conſequence; or if they pretend reference to another life, being but fabulous and irrationall, and not beleeved by the authours themſelves (as ſome of them have confeſſed) if the Authours ſhould ſummon in all the world to hearken upon terms of that deep and ſolemne ingagement, which the *Scriptures* do from place to place, they would render themſelves, and that which they have to ſay, but as ridiculous and weak to all knowing, and conſidering men. If a great King or Monarch ſhould ſend forth his Herauld at armes, or other Officer of ſtate, to ſummon in his Princes and nobles, and perſons of quality from all parts of his dominions, with delegates from all his ſubjects, to attend his pleaſure at his Court againſt ſuch a day; and having thus drawn them together, and rais'd their expectation concerning what he had to ſay, and impart unto them, ſhould onely diſcourſe to them of mint, aniſe, and cumin, or ſome ſuch inconſiderable ſubject, would not this

render him very unſavourie, and contemptibly weak in the eyes of all men? whereas in this caſe, if he had had any thing to communicate unto them, which neerly concern'd the peace and and ſafety of the whole State and Kingdome, the ſolemnity of the preparations hereunto mentioned, had been comely enough, and no waies diſparaging. In like manner for God to amuſe, and alarm the world with the dreadfull ſound of ſuch a Trumpet as this, *Let him that hath an ear to hear, hear*, having the great things of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and of eternity to entertain their attentions and expectations with, when he hath thus rais'd them, is nothing but what becomes the wiſedome and goodneſſe of a God: but for men to make ſuch an *O yes* in the midſt of the world, having nothing to ſay to men, and to inform them of, but onely matters of light conſequence, as how to live a few daies on earth with ſome carnall contentment, or the like, would be of an apparant inconſiſtencie with all rules of reaſon and common underſtanding. And upon this ground it is probable, that no man hath ever attempted to ingage the world at any ſuch rate.

There is another vein of expreſſion in the Scriptures, which, by the ſharpneſſe and piercingneſſe of it, differing from any thing that is found in other writers, declares them to be a writing by themſelves, and that fram'd by ſuch an Authour, who is God, and not man. Of this kinde are theſe ſayings: *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill: and he that is filthy let him be filthy ſtill*[a]. To which we may add that of the Apoſtle; *If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant*[b]. And that of the Prophet: *Ephraim is joyned unto Idols: let him alone*[c]. And that of our Saviour alſo: *Let them alone: they are blinde leaders of the blinde*[d]. Theſe and ſuch like, are terrible and high ſayings, vialls full of the wrath and indignation of a God: ſayings, which as they are not fit for, ſo neither are they lightly to be found in the mouths or writings of men, who have not ſpake, or wrot, in the Name of God, and as from his mouth.

[a] Rev. 22, 11.
[b] 1 Cor. 13 43.
[c] Hoſ. 4 17.
[d] Mat. 15. 14.

Fourthly, The ſtrange compoſition, or conſtitution of the Scriptures, being made up of depths and ſhallows, of things near at hand, and things afarre of, of things myſterious and profound, and things obvious and plain. That this is the true compoſition

poſition and frame of the body of the Scriptures, needs little proof or clearing, it being nothing (I conceive) but what we all acknowledge, and that upon ſufficient evidence of Truth. There are ſome things in them, which the ſtrongeſt are not able to underſtand: and ſome things again, whereof the weakeſt cannot lightly be ignorant. God may be ſaid to dwell in the Scriptures themſelves, as in the Scriptures he is ſaid to dwell. Sometimes he is ſaid to dwell in light, as 1 *Tim.*6 16. and 1 *Joh.* 1.7. Elſwhere he is ſaid to dwell in darkneſſe. *The Lord ſaid he would dwell in the thick darkneſſe*, 1 King.8.12. And *Pſal* 18. 11. *He hath made darkneſſe his ſecret place*. So in ſome places and paſſages of Scripture, God comes forth, and ſhews himſelf in clear and perfect beauty unto the world, as in a viſion of the noon day: otherwhere he retires and hides himſelf behinde the dark clouds of obſcure and difficult expreſſions, where we may ſeek him long, and not be able to finde him; as *Chriſt* ſaid unto the Jews; *ye ſhall ſeek me, and not finde me: and where I am can ye not come*[a]. The minde of God in many places of the Scripture, hath been in ſeeking, and that by diligent and able Inquiſitours, now for many generations: and yet no man can ſay, ſo as to give any reaſonable account thereof unto others, if to himſelf, that he hath found it. *There is a path* (ſaith *Job*) *which no fowl hath known: neither hath the vultures or kites eye ſeen it*[b]. So there is a path of reaſon and underſtanding which leadeth to the diſcovery of God, and of the minde of God, even where it is moſt retired, and hid at the greateſt diſtance from the thoughts and apprehenſions of men. But (as the ſame Authour ſpeaks) *it is* (as yet) *hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the fowles of the aire*[c]. 1. Even from men that flie the higheſt pitch of reaſon, wiſedome and labour, to diſcover it. On the other hand, in many other places, God ſits (as it were) on the very ſuperficies and face of the letter; where even he that runs may diſcern him; he *ſpeaks plainly* unto men, and *ſpeaketh no parable* at all.

[a] Joh.7.34.

[b] Job 28 7.

[c] Verſ.21.

Now ſuch a compoſition and frame of the Scriptures as this, the ingredients and parts whereof, being mountains and vallies, high things and low things, things obvious, and things inacceſſible, things earthly, and things heavenly (as our Saviour diſtinguiſheth

[a] Joh. 3. 12.

ſheth them [a]) ſo exactly anſwer the temper, and modell of the univerſe, or great body of the creature, is a great argument, that one and the ſame workman was the Architect, and contriver of them both. If we look into the conſtitution and frame of the univerſe, we ſhall ſee the like checker-work (as we may call it) here, *i.* things of different, yea of oppoſite natures and properties, ſet (as it were) one againſt the other, yet all ſweetly, peaceably, and beautifully conſpiring to render this great Fabrique one entire piece, worthy the great workman that made it, and ſutable to his wiſedom. Here firſt we have the heavens, a lucid, ſhining, and active piece, eminent in ſituation and place: again we have the earth, a ſad, dark, and heavy element, anſwering the heavens by way of oppoſition, both in nature, propertie, and place. We have the element of fire, hot and dry, on the one hand: and the element of water, cold and moiſt, one the other. In the body of the earth, we have high mountains in one place, and vallies and plains in another: and again, hard rocks and ſtony grounds in one place, and ſoft and fruitfull ſoyle in another. In the ſea, we have flatts and ſhallows, as well as great depths; yea, in this element, we have as well ſmall, as great, and great, as well as ſmall, beaſts; a diſpoſition of divine Providence which *David* taketh notice of; *Therein* (ſaith he, ſpeaking of the Sea) *are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts.* The like compoſition we have on earth alſo: gnatts as well as camels; flies, as well as Elephants or Lions. It were eaſie to inſtance in more particulars, in the frame of the univerſe, thus match'd and pair'd (as it were) by way of oppoſition and contrariety the one with the other.

The like conſtitution is obſervable in the Providence of God, and tenour of his Adminiſtrations in the world. Theſe conſiſt likewiſe, of diſpoſitions, diſpenſations, paſſages and events, one anſwering another by way of oppoſition and contrariety. *Conſider the Work of God* (ſaith the wiſe man) *for Who can make that ſtrait, Which he hath made crooked* [a]? implying, that God in his Providence (for he ſpeaks of his *Work* in this) makes ſome things *crooked*, i. croſſe, or contrary to mens deſires, as well as other things *ſtraight*, *i.* Commenſurable thereunto, and complying

[a] Eccleſ. 7. 13.

plying with them. *Job* gives another inſtance of the like contexture in the ſame work. *One* (ſaith he) *dieth in his full ſtrength, being in all eaſe and proſperity: his breſts are full of milk, and his bones runne full of marrow. And another dieth in the bitterneſſe of his ſoul, and never eateth with pleaſure* [a]. And *Solomon* yet another: *The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all* [b]. *i.* in his providence diſpoſeth of riches and poverty, as he pleaſeth; and ſo is the maker both of all the rich and all the poor in the world, not materially only, as they are men, but formally alſo, *viz.* as they are either rich or poor.

[a] Job 21, 23, 24, &c.

[b] Pro. 22, 2.

Again, If we look upon the naturall part of his Providence (as we may call it) here we ſhall ſee the ſame contexture and compoſition alſo. The naturall day (ſo called) is compounded of light and darkneſſe, according to the wiſe pleaſure of God in a regular tempering and diſpoſall of them. It is he likewiſe that *makes both the ſummer and the Winter* (as *David* takes, and gives knowledge [c]) and the yeer is compounded of theſe. So he makes rain and fair weather, ſtorms and calmes, and intermixeth them, as he pleaſeth.

[c] Pſal. 74. 17.

Now then inaſmuch as the ſtructure, frame, and conſtitution of the Scriptures, being ſuch as hath been declared, reſemble (as ye ſee) to the life, the reſpective tempers, conſtitutions, and complexions of thoſe other great pieces, which are confeſſedly, and without all controverſie God's, (I mean, the workmanſhip of his hands) the one anſwering the other, *as face anſwereth face in the waters*, they cannot in reaſon but be look'd upon as arguments of much conviction and ſtrength, to prove, that they alſo come from the hand of the ſame workman with the other.

Beſides this correſpondency which the Scriptures hold with thoſe other great works of God we ſpake of, in their conſtitution and frame, which amounts (as hath been ſaid) to a teſtimony of much value, that the one is his, as well as the other, the Scriptures his, as well as the Creation or Government of the world, his; the compoſition we deſcribed, doth yet in another conſideration and reſpect, plead their originall and deſcent from God. Height of majeſty, and depth of condeſcention found in conjunction, make as perfect a character or lineament

of the face of God, as well can be imagined. *Who is like unto the Lord God* (ſaid *David*) *who dwelleth on high* (or, as the Originall, and your larger Bibles have it in the margent, *who exalteth himſelf to dwell on high*) *who humbleth himſelf to behold* [a] Pſa.113.5,6. *the things that are in heaven and in the earth* [a]; *i* condeſcendeth to interpoſe graciouſly, not only in the affairs of the Angels, who in the order and rank of creatures are high, and next unto himſelf and his Sonne Jeſus Chriſt, in honour and excellency of being, to maintain and better their condition unto them, which notwithſtanding is a great condeſcenſion unto him; but alſo in the affairs of the pooreſt, and moſt contemptible, and weak amongſt men, who are farre beneath the Angels, to help, and comfort, and advance them (as appears in the following verſes.) Now this Interrogation, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* who being ſo high, looks ſo low, ſeems to imply, that this is a compoſition proper and peculiar unto God, and that there is little or nothing of it to be found amongſt thoſe that are *exalted*, and *dwell on high* upon the earth. They ſeldom or never *humble themſelves* to look beneath them; doe not intereſſe themſelves in the affairs of poor and mean men, to make their conditions better or more comfortable: no, they commonly behold the poore, as God doth *the proud, a farre off*: they deſpiſe them, and look upon their ſorrows, and troubles, and neceſſities, as impertinencies unto them. And as it is thus with men great in place and power in the world, in reſpect of thoſe who are beneath them in both; ſo it is commonly alſo with men that are great in parts, learning and underſtanding, in reſpect of thoſe who are but low and weak in their abilities: they ſeldom *humble* themſelves to treat with them, according to that which they are able to conceive, or underſtand, for their increaſe in wiſedom: if they can come up to their line of knowledge and underſtanding, and keep pace with them in their notions and expreſſions, they may receive benefit by them: but otherwiſe the men we ſpeak of, have no inclination to come down from the throne of their excellency, to miniſter to the neceſſities of weak and ignorant men. Thus then we ſee, how the very χράσις and temperature of the Scriptures, plead their relation of deſcent from God.

A fift particular, relating to the penning of the Scriptures, of like tendency and import with the former, is their Antiquity, eſpecially in thoſe parts of them, which bear the moſt ancient date, and were firſt laid as a foundatien of that intire fabrique, which hath ſince been raiſed, and built to it. The gray haires which are upon the head of the Scriptures, ſhew them to be the off-ſpring of the Ancient of daies. The writing we ſpeak of, hath the preeminency of all other writings in this point; it is the firſt-born amongſt all its brethren, I mean amongſt all other books and writings in the world; and may without boaſting compare with them all in the honour of ancientry, as the Lord *Chriſt* did with *Abraham*, when he ſaid, *Before Abraham was, I am* [a], So may the Scriptures ſay, before the writings of *Heſiod*, or *Homer*, or *Orpheus*, or *Linus*, *Triſmegiſtus*, or *Beroſus*, or any other Authour that is named under the heavens, *were*, we *are*; and that not only in reſpect of our originall copy, which was written without hands, and that from eternity in the minde and counſell of God, but in reſpect of ſuch a materiall writing alſo, as that wherein we now paſſe up and down the world, and are ſeen, and handled, and read, and underſtood by men. It is true, the body of the Scriptures, as now it is compleated, is not in all the parts of it, ſo full of daies as we ſpeak of: there are many books and writings to be found that bear a farre more ancient date, then that part of the Scripture which we call the new Teſtament; yea (poſſibly) then any the writings of the other Prophets (though this be denied by *Juſtin Martyr*, *Euſebius* and others) but in their head quarters, I mean, in the books and writings of *Moſes*, wherein the ſumme and ſubſtance of all the reſt is compriſed, they lye many years neerer the foundations of the world, and the building of the Sunns Tabernacle in the heavens, then all their fellows. *That which was from the beginning* (ſaith *John* to thoſe unto whom he writes) *do we declare unto you* [b]. This is more then any other writer in all the world can affirm, I do not ſay, with any ſufficient ground, but, with ſo much as any colourable ground of Truth, but only thoſe who draw from the fountains of the Scripture, what they declare in this kinde, and ſpeak the ſame things with them. The Goſpel, as touching the matter and ſubſtance of it, came from the mouth of God himſelf

[a] Joh. 8. 58.

[b] 1 Joh. 1. 1.

himſelf unto our firſt parents, preſently upon the fall; which, according to the beſt computation, was within leſſe then a daies ſpace of their creation. It came infolded and wrapt up in that Oracle: *the ſeed of the woman ſhall break the ſerpents head* [a]. And though for many generations together, it was no where written, but in *the fleſhly tables of the hearts* of men, and preſerved onely in living monuments; yet did it get the ſtart of all other ſubjects whatſoever, in the accommodation of writing; and had a Tabernacle of Ink and Paper, or ſome like materiall equivalent unto theſe, built for it, whilſt all other learning and knowledge lay yet in the open field, and had no other ſhelter or means of preſervation, but only the memories and tongues of men. *Juſtin Martyr* an ancient writer, who lived within 130. years after Chriſt, in his Paræneticque to the Greeks, proves, by comparing the times of all humane writers, Poets, Philoſophers, Hiſtorians, Lawgivers, eſteemed moſt ancient, that *Moſes* and his writings were extant in the world, before any of them had brought forth: yea and cleerly ſhews, that whatſoever *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Solon*, *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, or any other of thoſe Ancient writers of the Heathen, wrote concerning God, or divine matters with any ſavour or reliſh of Truth, they were debtours unto *Moſes* for it, and borrowed their light in ſuch things, from the lamp of his writings. *Euſebius* alſo, who followed *Juſtin Martyr* about 200. years diſtance, in the ſecond and third Chapters of the tenth book of his *Evangelicall Preparation*, proſecutes the ſame argument at large, and from abundance of places, paſſages, and confeſſions out of the beſt, and moſt Authentique Heathen Authours themſelves, cleerly demonſtrates, that *Moſes* was the moſt ancient of all the Writers, that were known, or named amongſt them. Yea and concludes thus (aſſertively) *therefore Moſes is found to be much more ancient, then all the Gods and Heroës of the Greeks* [b]; admoniſhing withall, that *it is much more reaſonable to give credit unto the elder and more ancient, from whom the juniors*, and thoſe that came after in time, *received* their grounds. And (to paſſe by many other Teſtimonies in this kinde) *Tertullian*, who lived between the two mentioned Authours, in the 19. chapter of his *Apologetique*, (though arguing the point with more brevitie then the former)

[a] Gen. 3.

[b] *Quare omnibus Dijs, ac Heroibus Græcorum, multò vetuſtior Moſes invenitur.*

[c] *Et oportet ſeniori, à quo juniores hauſerunt, multò magis credere.*

former) yet triumphs over the Gentiles in this Argument and proof for the truth of the Goſpel and Chriſtian Religion, the *Antiquity* of it.

If it be here demanded, but what if it be granted, that the Scritures, and the Doctrine therein contained, be the moſt ancient of all Books or Doctrines in the world, will it therefore follow, that they muſt needs be true, and the originall of them from God? May not the Doctrine, which hath the moſt gray haires upon it, and hath had the greateſt number of years gone over the head of it, be of a carnall and unworthy deſcent notwithſtanding, and not neceſſarily from God? *Gray haires* are not alwaies *found in a way of righteouſneſſe*; I anſwer

1. There is a naturall propenſion in moſt men (which ſeems by Gods Commandment in the Law, *to riſe up before the hoary head, and to honour the face of the old man*, Lev. 19. 32. to be a relique of *Adams* Tabernacle, whilſt it was yet ſtanding) to aſcribe much to that which is ancient, eſpecially to Authours, and writings, and monuments, religious uſages and obſervations. We know that the antiquity of the Popiſh Religion, ſuch as it is, is one thing which mainly intoxicates and bewitcheth both the heads and the hearts of thoſe, who bow down their backs unto it: there is a Gibeonitiſh mouldineſſe upon it; and therefore they think it hath travailed a long journey before it came to them in their daies. And *Tertullian* long ſince (in the foremention'd place) inſiſting upon the Argument in hand (the Antiquity of Chriſtian Religion) to demonſtrate the truth of it againſt the Heathen, tells them that they themſelves were great obſervers and admirers of things that were ancient: *It is little leſſe* (ſaith he) *then Religion with you, to give credit or belief unto things according to their time.* But

Apud vos quoq; Religionis eſt inſtar, fidem de temporibus aſſerere.

2. The more Ancient a Religion, or Doctrine is, it hath been ſo much the longer upon triall; the world hath had ſo much the more time, opportunity and means to inquire into the ſtate and condition of it; and ſo to diſcover the nakedneſſe, falſhood, or vanity of it, if it be unſound. Silver or gold, the oftner they have been caſt into the fire, and the longer they have continued in it, before they be taken out, are like to be ſo much the better and more pure metalls in their kinde. Now time, as (according to

the common saying) it is *edax rerum*, a consumer of things, so it is *index rerum* too, a touchstone or trier of things. Time will try any Doctrine, or opinion, whether it be sound, or unsound: and so it will every kinde of action, custome, or the like, whether they be lawfull and good, or no. And in this respect, the Apostle (I conceive) compares it unto fire, which is the most severe touchstone and trier of whatsoever is apt to be tried by it, as some minerals, and metalls, and all such things are, whose nature is to abide the fire without damage, when they are right, and perfect in their kindes. *Every mans work* (saith he, speaking particularly of Doctrines taught by Ministers) *shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every mans work of whatsoever it is*[a]; meaning, that time (which he calls, *the day*) in the course and progresse of it, hath a like searching, piercing, and separating nature and property, in respect of Doctrines and opinions, which fire hath in respect of *silver and gold, hay stubble and timber*; so that as these being cast into the *fire*, will easily be distinguished and discerned the one from the other, *silver and gold* abiding it without damage, whereas *hay, and stubble, and timber*, will be consum'd by it; in like manner for Doctrines and opinions which are sound and substantiall truths, though they may for some ages together endure contradiction and censure, as if they were erroneous and false, yet *the day* will, in the processe of it, restore them to their native dignity and honour without disparagement; yea and will discover errour and vanity in many others, which for a season have rejoyced in the undue applause and approbation of men. The reason of this fiery property in time, which the Apostle speaks of, the Prophet *David* cleerly assignes, where he saith, that *day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge*[a]; meaning, that there is not any day, or any night, that passeth over the head of the world, but that as well the one, as the other, bring with them a blessing of new light, some further knowledge and instruction in one kinde or other, unto the world. By means whereof, things that were *covered*, come in time, to be *revealed*; and things hid, to be made *known* (according to our Saviours prediction, *Luk.* 12.2.) The same discerning or discovering property of the *day*, is supposed also by the same Apostle,

[a] 1 Cor. 3.13.

[a] Psal. 19.2.

Quicquid sub terrâ est, in apricum proferet ætas. *Hor.*

2 *Tim.*

2 *Tim.*3.9. where ſpeaking of corrupt Teachers, who reſiſt the truth,as *Jannes* and *Jambres* did *Moſes*, *But* (ſaith he) *they ſhall prevail no longer: for their madneſſe ſhall be evident unto all men, as theirs alſo was.* From whence (by the way)it may be worthy obſervation, that men may *reſiſt the truth*, and that like *mad* men, after a furious,violent,and importune manner, and yet for a time be thought well of, and carry the approbation of the greateſt part of Chriſtians. This property of the *day* alſo our Saviour himſelf ſuppoſeth, *Mat.*15.13. But our purpoſe is abbreviation,not inlargement. Yet

3. This Argument drawn from the Antiquity, to evince the truth and goodneſſe of a Religion,is then very forcible, and little leſſe then demonſtrative indeed, when the Religion, which hath for a long time, from generation to generation, been continued,profeſſed, and held up in the world, hath withall from time to time, from the firſt riſe and ſpring of the profeſſion of it,been ſtill oppoſed and perſecuted in the world; and the profeſſours of it, by this their profeſſion, rendred obnoxious to the hatred, malice, rage and fury of the world; if ſuch a thing as this notwithſtanding, this Religion ſhall be ſtill loved, embrac'd, profeſs'd in the world;and live, and be like ſtill to live, and proſper in the midſt of the ſtormy and tempeſtuous proceedings of the world againſt it, though there be little hope of the ceaſing of theſe ſtorms for a long time; in ſuch a caſe (I ſay) as this, the Antiquity of a Religion, is a mighty confirmation of the truth, and revelation of it from God. The reaſon is, becauſe that property in it, to eat up it's Profeſſours, to expoſe them to troubles, ſorrows, afflictions from the world, hath alwaies been a tentation, a kinde of prudentiall ingagement upon men, to inquire and ſearch ſo much the more narrowly into the eſtate and condition of it, and fully to ſatisfie themſelves whether it be a Religion worth the ſuffering for, or no, before they ſhould own it, or ingage themſelves in the profeſſion of it, it being a moſt irrationall act, and unworthy of men,to ſell their precious comforts, peace,and accommodations in the world, for ſuch a thing, which they know not, whether it will benefit them in the leaſt, or no. And when men are to judge or give ſentence with relation to themſelves, in matters which ſo neerely concern them, in matters

appertaining to the flesh, there is little fear they should be brib'd by the spirit, but much that they should be led away with partiality on the fleshes side. So that (doubtlesse) did not men see somewhat like God, I mean somewhat that commands and overawes their consciences in such a Religion, which threatens their flesh so soar, they would never have to doe with it upon any such termes of danger, as thousands have had to doe with the Religion contained in the Scriptures, thorowout all ages.

Fourthly, The longer any Religion hath continued or stood in the world upon the terms expressed, it hath tasted the spirits and judgements not only of so many the more men, but of generations of men. Now as *Solomon* gives this reason, *Why two are better then one*, viz. because *if one fall, his fellow will help him up*; in like manner, when a matter or businesse of so much concernment, as such a Religion, as was mentioned, is, hath passed thorow the hands, not of one, nor of two, nor of a few, but of many generations, it is not lightly possible, but that, in case one or two of these generations had had so little of men in them, as to look no better to themselves, then to suffer their feet to be taken in such snare, to go on with the profession of such a Religion, which threatned them with apparant losse in the world, and promised them nothing in compensation thereof upon any hopefull or likely grounds, yet first or last, some one or other of these generations would have corrected the errour of those that went before them, and so have quite abandoned, and thrown that Religion out of the world, which had so abused their forefathers.

Now we know that the *Antiquity* of Christian Religion (and consequently of the Scriptures, wherein it is contained, and held forth) and Profession thereof, hath that great advantage we speak of in conjunction with it, to render it full of Authority, and excellent in power, to demonstrate the goodnesse and truth of this Religion, and consequently the Relation which it bears unto God, as the Authour and Revealer of it. The Profession hereof, ever since it was taken up in the world, from the daies of *Adam* and *Abel*, even untill now, hath exposed the Professours to all manner of sorrows, troubles, and evil intreaties from the world. This the stories of all ages successively from the bloud of *Abel*, unto the last sufferer for it (whoever he is, or was)

doe

doe abundantly teſtifie: and (indeed) is nothing but what is generally granted on all hands. And yet we ſee, though it hath waded thorow ſo many deep waters, yea oceans of bloud; though it hath paſſed thorow ſo many fires, and the flames from time to time have kindled ſorely upon it, yea though there be yet more flames of fire, and ſeas of bloud before it in the way thereof, yet it lives, and lifts up its head in the world, and hath thoſe in abundance, who are ready ſtill to ſuffer for it. Whereas all other Religions in the world, are but punies, and as of yeſterday, in compariſon of it: and beſides that Antiquity which they have, is not ſeconded with any ſuch collaterall advantage to make it argumentative, wherewith the Religion of Chriſtians, who profeſſe the Goſpel and Doctrine of the Scriptures, is accompanied (as hath been ſhewed) and ſo hath little force in it to prove any truth or ſoundneſſe in them. It was a true obſervation of one, *that the gods of the heathen were good fellows*, and liked the company of one another well enough: it was only the God of *Iſrael*, whoſe Name was *Jealous*, and muſt be worſhipped alone. It was never ſaid (not yet verified by any experience) that whoſoever ſhould be ſtrict, or live conſcienciouſly, in the profeſſion of any other Religion, ſhould *ſuffer perſecution*; but that *all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhould ſuffer perſecution*, is *affirmed* by the Apoſtle [a], and *confirmed* by the experience of all ages and places, when, and where any thorow-profeſſion of the Doctrine of Chriſt, and of the Scriptures, hath taken place.

[a] 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Fiftly and laſtly (to this) when the Antiquity of a Religion is ſuch, that it is able to calculate and prove the day of its nativity in the world, to have had the precedencie in time, before all other Religions whatſoever, in this caſe the gray haires that are upon the head of it, doe fully evince it to be a way of righteouſneſſe, a religion that is from God. The reaſon is, becauſe as God had a being before Satan, ſo had he a worſhip and Religion before him: nor is errour or falſhood in any kinde, any thing elſe, but a miſtake, or corruption of, or deviation from, the truth. Therefore that Religion which is moſt ancient, muſt needs be from God; and all ſubſequent Religions, ſo-farre as they diſſent from that, or are contrary to it, are from ſome baſe Authour, and of a deluſive inſpiration. Now that the Religion

comprehended in the Scriptures, was brought forth, and had a being in the world, when all other Religions were yet beneath in the earth, is (as hath been already argued and proved) the acknowledgement of some of the greatest Prophets and Patrons themselves of all, or of most, and of the most considerable, of all other Religions.

Sixtly, The manner of the bringing and coming in of the Gospel into the world by the Scriptures, I mean in respect of the growth, or graduall discovery and manifestation of it, the body of the Scriptures still waxing and increasing with further light, unto the just compleature of them, which now they have attained, and wherein they rest, and have rested, these 1500. years and upwards, is another argument or consideration effectually perswading the descent and parentage both of the one and the other, from God. The Gospel came not at once in the fullnesse of the beauty, strength and perfection of it into the world: in the first spring and dawning of it, it was only a kind of brief and obscure Oracle, like the first dawning of the day, when there is a little mixture of light, with a greater quantity or proportion of darknesse in the air. It was no more but this; *The seed of the woman shall break the serpents head* [b]; a saying which glimmered indeed with some light of good intended towards mankinde: but there was no distinct form or shape of that good, which was intended, nor of the means or Authour by whom it was to be effected. It was but like the corn, when it first sprouts and peers above ground, which hath nothing that shape or body, which it comes to afterwards. Being thus in the bud and tender shoot of it, it was watered by those precepts and directions which were graciously given by God unto *Adam* and his family, concerning such a worship, and such services, as he required, especially by his command for offring sacrifices, together with his acceptation of these sacrifices duly offered, some waies or other signified unto those, who offered them. As oft as men offered upon such terms as these, God accepted them; and so they had from time to time renewed acts of confirmation from God, that his heart was with them, and that he fully intended them good; and so were more and more established in the love and goodnesse of God towards them. As a Charter, or act of Grace from

[b] Gen. 3.

from a Princ e, whether to a Corporation,or perſon, the oftner it is renewed by him, affords the more ſecurity unto thoſe that are concern'd in it, of a full injoyment of all priviledges therein granted and intended.

When the Goſpel had been in the world upon theſe terms, and under this firſt degree of diſcovery, about 1660. years, immediatly after the deſtruction of the world by the flood, God publiſheth a new edition of it unto *Noah* and his family, which was then the whole world of mankind. And though in this ſecond edition, the Goſpel came forth in ſomewhat more plain and diſtinct words, (I mean, in words more eaſie to be underſtood) then in the former, yet the great particularities of the myſtery of it, wherein the glory and ſtrength of it conſiſt, and which were afterwards, though a long time after, brought forth into a cleer light, were not a whit more opened or diſcovered, then in that. The Goſpel, in this ſecond impreſſion we ſpeak of, was publiſhed, partly in the renewing of that Benediction and Charter, wherein the Lordſhip of the world had been by God conferr'd upon man in his creation [a]; partly alſo in certain promiſes concerning the continuance and ſtanding of the world, and that upon terms of Grace and comfort unto the inhabitants of it, for many generations [b]. Both theſe plainly ſhew,that God is in a reconciled poſture towards the world (and conſequently have ſomewhat of the Goſpel in them) as by a larger conſideration, as well of the one, as of the other, we made to appear, when time was: but for the preſent we only recapitulate.

[a] Gen. 9. 2.

[b] ver. 10, 11.

The Goſpel, under this edition of it, continued in the world untill the daies of *Abraham*, for the ſpace of more then 360. years. And now God was pleaſed to think of a new Edition of it, and (as it were) to dedicate it unto *Abraham* his friend. In this Edition, it came forth with ſome further light and diſcovery of ſome of the particularities of it, beyond what was to be found in either of the former; as *viz.* 1. Of what family he ſhould come, that ſhould *break the ſerpents head*; *In thy ſeed* (ſaith God to *Abraham*) *ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed* [a]. 2. Unto what the breaking of the Serpents head, being interpreted, doth amount unto, *viz.* the bleſſedneſſe of men. *In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.* 3. Of what extent

[a] Gen. 22. 18.

extent the *bleſſedneſſe*, which *Abrahams* ſeed ſhould bring upon the world, by *breaking the ſerpents head*, ſhould be, how farre it ſhould extend and reach: this is, to all the nations of the earth. *In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.* 4. Here was a diſcovery made of that particular act or qualification in men, by which they are brought into part and fellowſhip, and come to partake of that bleſſedneſſe, which was brought unto the world by the ſeed of *Abraham*, *viz.* Faith, or beleeving God, or, in God. *And he* (ſaith *Moſes*, ſpeaking of *Abraham*) *beleeved God, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſſe*[b]. 5. In this Edition of the Goſpel, here was a picture, a lively portraicture or type of *that ſeed of the Woman*, that ſhould doe this bleſſed ſervice for the world, *break the ſerpents head*, both in reſpect of ſome perſonall properties or relations, as likewiſe of the means by which he ſhould doe it. Here was *Iſaak*, an *only ſonne* (as he is called, *Gen.* 22.2. *viz.* by a lawfull wife) and *a beloved ſonne* (in the ſame place) offered up in ſacrifice unto God, by his father. For ſo the Scripture ſpeaks: *By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Iſaak; and he that had received the promiſes, offered up his only begotten Sonne*[c]. *Abraham* is ſaid to have *offered up* his ſonne *Iſaak*, either becauſe he preſented him unto God upon the Altar, which was an *offring* of him *up*; or rather becauſe he had fully purpoſed to have perfected the offering by his ſonnes death, had not God himſelf interpoſed from heaven to reſtrain him. And as God *accepts the will for the deed*, ſo doth he uſually call the *will*, or ſetled purpoſe of doing, by the name of the deed. 6. And laſtly, He finiſhed this Edition of the Goſpel, by adding his *ſeal* for the confirmation of it, *the ſigne of Circumciſion*; which, according to the holy Ghoſts own interpretation, was *a ſeal of the righteouſneſſe of faith*[a], *i.* a pledge, or confirmation, that whoſoever beleeved in God, ſhould be hereby juſtified, or made *righteous*, and conſequently be ſaved, and made everlaſtingly bleſſed.

[b] Gen. 15 6.

[c] Heb. 11. 17.

[a] Rom. 4. 11.

The world injoyed the Goſpel in this Edition of it, only with ſome typicall additions, as in *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, and ſome extraordinary diſcoveries from heaven relating unto it, now and then, to revive and quicken the remembrance of it in the hearts and mindes of men, as in the ladder which *Jacob* ſaw, which

*reach'd*

*reach'd from Earth to Heaven*, and the Angel that wraſtled with him, *&c.* The world (I ſay) injoyed the Goſpel in that edition of it, which was publiſhed in the daies of *Abraham* untill the daies of *Moſes*, and the giving of the Law upon mount *Sinah*, which was about the ſpace of 430. years more. And now God made a fourth edition of it, enlarging the former with a great multitude and varietie of typicall reſemblances, wherein all, or the greateſt part of thoſe myſterious and ſubſtantiall particularities of it, were darkly ſhadowed, and portraitured out, as by the *Tabernacle* and *Prieſt-hood*, by waſhings, and ſprinklings, and feaſts, and by Sacrifices eſpecially of many kinds, with a great variety of rites and obſervations accompanying them. This edition of the Goſpel, onely with ſome poſt-ſcripts of types and figures ever and anon appearing, as in the *braſen Serpent*, *Manna*, *Joſhua*, *Sampſon*, *David*, *Solomon*, and ſome dawnings and glimerings of ſomewhat a clearer light ſhining from ſome of the Prophets, continved untill the daies of the promiſed *ſeed of the Woman*, vntill he came in the fleſh, who was to doe that great charge and ſervice for the world, *viz.* by *breaking the Serpents head* to make the world whole. This was about the ſpace of 1517 yeeres more. Now he being *the Lord from Heaven*, and coming out of *the boſom of the Father*, where the Goſpel was form'd and faſhioned in all the parts and members of it, and had been (comparatively) *hid* and *kept ſecret* from the foundation of the world untill then, brought with him a perfect copie or extract of it, as a preſent from God his Father, ſent by his hand unto the world; which he in ſpeciall manner recommended unto his Apoſtles, to be by them publiſhed and preached thorowout the world, after that upon his Aſcention into Heaven, they had been *endued with ſtrength from on High* for that purpoſe, and had received the holy Ghoſt in an extraordinary manner, both to be a remembrancer unto them of what *in the daies of his fleſh* he had imparted unto them concerning the Goſpel [a], as likewiſe an Interpreter of the more myſterious ſence and meaning of many of theſe things [b]. Being now aſcended, and in full poſſeſſion of glory, to let his Servants and Saints in all generations know, that neither his love unto them, nor care for their good, were

[a] Joh. 14. 26.

[b] Joh. 16. 13. 14.

either ſwallowed up in his exaltation, or impaired in the leaſt by the Greatneſſe of his glory, he obtained from his Father the bleſ-
c Revel. 1. 3. ſing of that *Revelation* or *Prophecie* (as it is called [c]) for them, which he imparted unto his Beloved Diſciple and Apoſtle *John*, with a ſpeciall charge and order given him, to commit the ſame unto writing, that ſo it might be a light of conſolation unto his Saints, ſhining in the midſt of the darkneſſe of their tribulations and ſufferings, to the worlds end. And with this Revelation, he hath taken his leave of his Churches, untill his perſonall returne againe unto them. So that this laſt and compleate edition of the Goſpel, containeth (beyond all the former, and with the raſure and diſ-authorization of many things conteined in them, in reference unto practice) thoſe paſſages of Evangelicall Doctrine and Heavenly wiſdome, which the Lord *Chriſt* himſelf uttered on Earth in the daies of his fleſh, together with that Revelation which he gave down from Heaven, after his exaltation; as alſo thoſe Hiſtoricall and Doctrinall Informations and inſtructions, which are comprehended in the writings of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, together with thoſe two new ſeals, Baptiſme, and the Supper of the Lord, for the confirmation of the Truth of things aſſerted in both. This edition being perfect, the world is to expect no more additions or poſt-ſcripts, to the end of it. Now if you pleaſe to compute the ſeverall ſpaces of time mentioned in this argument, and draw them together in one account or ſumme, allowing about 66 yeeres more, for the ſpace between the time that our Saviour preached the Goſpel on Earth, and gave unto *John* the Revelation mentioned, from Heaven (which is the complement, and as it were the laſt page of this new and laſt edition of the Goſpel) you will finde the whole diſtance or ſpace, from the firſt entrance of the Goſpel into the world, in that oracle we ſpake of, *The ſeed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpents head*, untill the laſt edition of it completed, to amount to about 4043 yeares.

Let us now breifly conſider, what there is in this graduall manifeſtation; and growth of the Goſpel, and of the Scriptures, for ſo great a ſpace of time as 4000 yeares and upward, before they came to perfection, to demonſtrate the pedegree and deſcent of them to be from God.

We

We know it is Gods uſuall method in things ſublunarie, and endued with life, to raiſe and build them up to their reſpective perfections, upon the groundworke and foundations of imperfection. The corne is brought forth out of the Earth by thoſe degrees, which our Saviour himſelf takes knowledge of: *firſt the blade, then the ear, and after this, the full corne in the eare*[a]. *Paul* was firſt *a child*, and all this while, *ſpake as a child, thought as a child*, did as a child: but afterwards, in proceſſe of time, he *became a man* (as he ſaith) and *then he put away childiſh things*[b]. It is ſaid of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, that he *increaſed in wiſdome and ſtature, and in favour with God and man*[c]. You will find it thus in plants, and trees, and fruits, and all things that have life in them: they increaſe by degrees and grow to their maturitie and perfection, from much weakneſſe and imperfection at the firſt: and any conſiderable growth or increaſe in what is good, is emphatically called, *the increaſe of God*: *increaſeth with the increaſe of God* (ſaith *Paul*, ſpeaking of that *increaſe*, which the Church, or body of *Chriſt* maketh in Knowledge, Faith, Holineſſe, and *Love*, by being *knit together*, and having nouriſhment miniſtred from the head, by the *joints and bands* in the body[d].) So then this having been the expreſſe manner (as you have heard) method, and courſe, wherein the Goſpel hath advanc'd, and growen to that fullneſſe and height of perfection, whereat it now ſtands, doth it not carry a ſtrength of inducement in it, to conceive and judge, that it is a plant of *Paradiſe*, planted by the hand of God himſelf, in as much as it doth ſo ὁμοιάζειν (as the Scripture word is in another caſe) *i.* holds ſuch a correſpondencie with, and reſemble's ſo perfectly the method and diſpoſition of God in other things?

[a] Mar. 4. 28.

[b] 1 Cor. 13. 11.

[c] Luk. 2. 52.

[d] Colo. 2. 19.

Nor can it reaſonably be objected to the prejudice of this argument, that Arts, and Sciences, and humane inventions in ſeverall kinds, have received additionall increaſes and augmentation, from time to time, as well as the Goſpel; being at this day (at leaſt moſt of them) raiſed to a line of perfection, farre above what they had obtained in their Infancies and youth. For

1. Though Arts and Sciences, and many artificiall inventions which had no greater founders, or Authors, then men (in the ſence,

we argue thorowout this whole discourse) have in continuance of time, and successively received their graduall advancements, and respective growths in strength and beauty; yet this hath been with these 2 signall observations, and differences between them, and the Gospel or Scriptures, First, the men who have been Sucessively imployed to raise and build up the body of the Scriptures, have onely built, and never pulled down: he that succeeded in the work, never contended with, never contested against his Predecessor, nor found the least fault with his work-manship; whereas the Great Architects, and builders up of arts and sciences, have still fallen out one with another about their work; he that followed, blaming him that went before, as defective in his way, and insufficient for his undertaking; pretending (for the most part) to correct his errours, and attempting to overthrow, what he asserted. So that the increase and augmentation of Arts and Sciences, being purchased or procured, as well by the pulling downe of what either thorow negligence, or ignorance, had bin built amisse, as by the superaddition of what was regular and sound, carry an expresse character in them of the weaknesse and insufficiencie of those, by whom they received them, and consequetly, of those also who were the founders, and first fathers of them, whereas the increase of the Gospel, and growth of the Scriptures, have still advanced without the least errour or shadow of miscarriage in their way, those who were set on work to make the former supplements or addition, being never questioned or corrected for any thing they wrote, but attested rather and commended, by those who were ingaged in the latter.

2. Though Artes and Sciences and particular Inventions of men, have received growth and increase, since their respective births, or first ground-work laid in the world, yet is there none of them brought to any such perfection, but they are still capable of further augmentation and increase, yea there are new additions made unto them daily: yea there is little question to be made, but that they will be still growing and increasing whilst the world stands, and yet never come to their period of perfection; much like those *silly Women* whom the Apostle represents,

ſents, *laden with ſin, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth.* 2 Tim. 3. 6, 7. Whereas the Scriptures and the Goſpel, have had the Seal of their conſumation and accompliſhment upon them for theſe many generations; nor hath any man attempted, at leaſt with any ſucceſſe, or acceptation with conſidering men, ſince the writing of the book of the Revelation, to indite or publiſh any thing by way of additament unto them, or as any further part, or member of them. This perfection, & incapacity of any further inlargment from men, found in the Goſpel and Scriptures, atteſted and acknowledged by the whole world for theſe 1500. years & upwards, is a pregnant inducement to this belief, that he is both the Authour and finiſher of them, who knowes how to accompliſh and perfect his works and undertakings at ſuch a rate, that neither the Wiſdome nor skill of any creature are able to make any addition unto them. *I know* (ſaith the wiſe man) *that whatſoever God doeth, it ſhall be for ever: nothing can be put to it*[a] &c. Whereas that invincible imperfection, which is found in Arts and Sciences (invincible I mean, in reſpect of their ſtrength, who are, and have been, labouring and ſtriving from the firſt ages of the world to this day, to overcome it, but have not been able) is a great argument, that as well the Founders of them, as Benefactors, are but men.

[a] Eccle. 3. 14.

Seventhly, There is in the Scriptures a mageſtique kinde of ſecurity, under many ſeeming (yea many ſeemingly bold, and venturous) contradictions, that yet neither the Honour of their Truth, nor that unitie which they have, in and with themſelves, ſhall at all ſuffer hereby. The conſideration hereof is of the ſame bleſſed confederacie with the former arguments, tending to cleare the pedegree of the Goſpel, and to demonſtrate the originall of the Scriptures to be from God. We ſhall not need to make any large collection of ſuch places or paſſages, whoſe faces ſeem to be ſet, and this ſometimes very fiercely, the one againſt the other. I cannot but judge that of your ſelves you know many in this kinde. If we ſhould but narrowly examine the two Genealogies which the two Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Luke* have drawn up in their Goſpels, to ſhew our Saviours pedegree and lineall deſcent according to the fleſh, and compare them, 1. Between themſelves, the one with the other. 2. Both

the one and the other of them with ſeverall places in the old Teſtament, we ſhall be furniſhed with inſtances in abundance of ſeeming (yea many ſtrongly ſeeming, ſeemingly irreconcilable) contradictions. But for particulars in this kinde, I had rather (Reader) referre thee, to ſuch expoſitors and writers upon the places, Who being diligent and judicious, as they have taken notice of theſe friendly (though enemy-like-ſeeming) conteſts and oppoſitions between Scriptures and Scriptures, ſo have they interpoſed, and that with much felicitie of ſucceſſe, to compound them: amongſt whom, I ſhould abuſe an opportunitie of *giving honour, to Whom honour belongeth*, if I ſhould not recommend unto *thee Fredericus Spanhemius*, [a] late (if not preſent) Profeſſor of Divinity in *Geneva*, for a man, both faithfull and diligent, to take knowledge of, and of ſingular dexteritie and ingeniouſneſſe to compromiſe theſe knottie and troubleſome Phœnomena in this part of the face of Heaven. A little before my publique handling this theme concerning the Authority and originall of the Scriptures, I had occaſion in the courſe of my Miniſtry, to expound the Genealogy of *Matthew*; in which expoſition I ſalved the ſoares of thoſe ſeeming inconſiſtencies between the two Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Luke*, and reconciled both the one and the other of them with the Old Teſtament in ſuch paſſages, wherein there was an appearance or face of a combate [a]: in which atcheivement, I acknowledge my ſelf a debtor to the pen and paines of the ſaid Author.

[a] In his *Dubia Evangelica.*

[a] Which was one reaſon why in laying down the argument in hand to prove the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, I only inſtanced ſome of theſe ſeeming contradictions, without repeating their Solutions, being ſo lately delivered before.

It were eaſy to multiply inſtances of this kind, where Scripture ſeems to riſe up againſt Scripture, and ſaying againſt ſaying, and that not only in genealogicall computations, but even in matters of another nature, and which ſeem to be, yea and really are, of greater weight and moment; and yet one Scripture be wrai's no manner of fear of hurting another, or of prejudicing the Honour or Truth of another. The Scripture, *Prov.* 26. 4. Injoynes men, *not to anſwer a foole according to his folly*, and yet in the very next verſe, there ſeems to be a quite contrary injunction: *Anſwer a fool acording to his folly. Alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael* (ſaith *Samuel*, ſpeaking of God) *will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he ſhould*

*Repent*

*Repent* [b]: and yet it is twice ſaid of him in the ſame chapter that he did *repent*. Himſelf tells *Samuel*, that he *repented that he had ſet up Saul to be King* [c]: and afterward it is expreſſely ſaid that *the Lord repented that he had made Saul King over Iſrael* [d]. It is ſaid, Gen. 22. 1. that *God tempted Abraham*: yet Iam. 1. 13. men, *when they are tempted*, are forbidden to ſay, *that God tempteth them*; and that upon this ground, becauſe *God tempteth no man* And (to forbear any more inſtances) the Apoſtle injoyneth the Philippians (and that again and again) to *rejoyce in the Lord allwaies*: yea *and againe* (ſaith he) *I ſay rejoyce* And yet injoynes them alſo to *worke out their Salvation, with fear and trembling* [f]. It were eaſy to make this pile of ſeeming contrarieties in the Scriptures much greater: but by theſe wherein inſtance hath been given, we may plainly diſcerne, that there is a greater eye of ſuch paſſages there, whoſe appearance is as if they affronted one the other, and were at open warres amongſt themſelves: Yea that is further conſiderable, that in all the inſtances given (as likewiſe it is, if not in all, yet in moſt of the reſt that might be given, being of the ſame conſideration) the Scriptures, which carrie the ſtrongeſt appearance of being contrary to their fellowes, yet bewray no manner of tenderneſſe in this behalfe. They doe not ſtand to excuſe or purge themſelves, as if there were any cauſe at all to ſuſpect them for any croſſeneſſe or contrariety unto others; no, they ſpeak from place to place, what they have a minde to ſay, with that liberty and freedome, as if there were nothing ſaid by them elſewhere, that either was like to ſuffer the leaſt prejudice by it, or elſe to caſt the leaſt prejudice on it.

Now then, Let us conſider a little, whither there be not in the conſideration held forth unto you, that which bewrayes ſomewhat more then humane in the Scriptures. Of all writings under Heaven, they aſſume moſt unto themſelves, as that they are *the words of eternall Life* that they are *inſpired by God*, that they are the *teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*, the *faithfull witneſſe, that they ſhall judge the world*, that they are *that immortall ſeed of which the ſons and daughters of God muſt be begotten*, &c. And yet they ſpeak and utter themſelves from place to place, as if they cared not to deſtroy that Intereſt of Authoritie,

[b] 1 Sam. 15. 29.
[c] verſe. 11.
[d] verſe. 35.

The conſiſtencie of theſe places, with many other ἐναντιοφανῆ in the Scriptures, is ſufficiently opened by many Interpreters.

[e] Philip. 4. 4.
[f] Philip. 2. 12.

thoritie, credit, and belief, which in ſome places they labour to procure for themſelves, in the hearts and conſciences of men. For that which in one place they build up, in another they ſeeme to pull down; that which in one place they affirme, in another they ſeem to deny: what in one place they injoyn and recommend to be done, in another they ſeem to prohibit, and to reſtraine from doing. Some of them ſeem to lye to the North, and ſome to the South: ſome to the Eaſt, and ſome to the weſt; and to conflict, combate and contend amongſt themſelves, as *the four Windes of the Heavens* did in *Daniels* viſion; *upon the Sea*[a]. And yet for all this, they ſtand before all the world, God, Angels, and men, like *Princes* (as *Job* ſpeak's) undaunted, untroubled, un-appald, as full of confidence to proſper in their way, and carry the world before them, to gaine upon the hearts, and ſouls, and conſciences of men, as if they knew nothing by themſelves, were conſcious of nothing in themſelves, that were like to hinder them. So then this is that which I ſay, that ſuch a Security and majeſtique confidence, as the Scriptures ever and anon bewray of doing great matters, of turning the world (as it were) upſide downe, of being had in reverence and high eſteem with men, upon ſuch terms of diſadvantage, and reaſons to feare the contrary (as fleſh and blood might reaſonably judge) is a ſigne that their confidence is divine, & that their ſecurity in ſuch a caſe, is the ſecurity of God; eſpecially conſidering that this their confidence *makes them not aſhamed*, but is juſtified from Heaven daily by ſucceſſe anſwerable to it. If they did not know, that God both could & would, give guifts of reaſon, wiſdome, and underſtanding unto men whereby to throw downe the mountains, and to fill up the valleys that are in them, and to make the rough things plaine, to make a clear peace between things that ſeeme to be at variance, yea and that he would ſtirre up their hearts, to ingage themſelves, and improve theſe abilities accordingly; at leaſt if they had not known, that men would ſo far reverence thoſe beames of light, thoſe glorious Truths, which clearly ſhine in them, as for their ſakes to reverence the hidden things of darkneſſe, which are there, and the things which they cannot underſtand, ſo far at leaſt, as not to reject

[a] Dan. 7. 2.

ject the things that are cleere, becauſe of the things that are obſcure; if (I ſay) the Scriptures had not known and fore-ſeen theſe things, they would (doubtleſſe) have been as tender of their own intereſt in this kinde, as provident for themſelves and their own honour, as men uſe to be in their writings. Men that write and make books upon their own intereſt becauſe they know not, in caſe they ſhould write as knottily as the Scriptures are written (in many places) and let ſuch ſentences or ſayings paſſe from their pen from place to place, which would trouble men as much, ingage men as deep, to make a conſiſtencie of ſence between them, as the Scriptures frequently doe; becauſe they know not (I ſay) whether men would ever be at this coſt and charge with their writings, or no, or caſt any ſuch honour upon them, to make their darkneſſe, light; therefore they are very tender, cautious, and circumſpect (eſpecially thoſe that are the wiſeſt, and moſt conſiderable amongſt them) not to expoſe themſelves ſo much as to the leaſt ſuſpicion of writing contradictions, of being inconſiſtent with themſelves. And when they have any occaſion to ſay or expreſſe any thing, which carrieth an appearance in it of ſome contrariety to what they affirm elſewhere, they ſtill give notice of it in one kinde or other, and are carefull to diſtinguiſh, and to explain themſelves with much anxiety and warineſſe, as being timorous and fearfull, that otherwiſe they ſhould ſuffer loſſe in the opinions and eſteem of men. Whereas the Scriptures on the contrary, in many places ſeem to ſpeak, as if they cared not either to be underſtood, or beleeved: and yet otherwiſe expreſſe as great a confidence of both, as if they knew nothing by themſelves (as was ſaid) why they ſhould diſtruſt or queſtion either. When they come to aſſert or deliver any thing afterwards, which ſeems to trench upon ſomething which they had formerly ſaid, they are ſo farre from giving any notice or warning of ſuch a thing, or from diſtinguiſhing themſelves into a cleerneſſe of conſiſtence with themſelves, to prevent a miſapprehenſion in this kinde in the thoughts of men, that very frequently they expreſſe the negative, in the ſame word or terme wherein the affirmative was expreſſed before, and on the contrary; as it were on purpoſe to raiſe and ſtrengthen the ſeemingneſſe of the contradiction.

For example, *Luk.*1.73,74, the tenour or import of *the Oath, which God ſware unto Abraham our Father*, is ſaid to be this, τὸ δοῦναι ἡμῖν, ἀφόβως λατρεύειν αὐτῷ, i. *that he would grant unto us, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we ſhould ſerve him* **without fear** &c. And yet *Phil.*2.12. Chriſtians are injoyned, μὴ φόβῳ καὶ τρόμῳ ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε, i. *to work out their ſalvation* **with fear** *and trembling.* So *Matth.*7.7. our Saviours promiſe is, αἰτεῖτε, καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν, **ask**, *and it ſhall be given you:* yet *James* ſaith to thoſe, to whom he writes, Αἰτεῖτε, καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε, i. *ye* **ask**, *and yet receive not* [a]. To paſſe by many other places of like conſideration; our Saviour profeſſeth, *that he was not ſent, but to the loſt* **ſheep** *of the houſe of Iſrael* [b]: and yet profeſſeth, *Joh.*10.16, that *he had other* **ſheep** *alſo, which were not of this fold* (meaning, of the Jewiſh nation) *whom alſo he muſt bring to hear his voice* &c.

The true ſence, together with the mutuall conſiſtencie of theſe, & other like paſſages, are to be inquired, and may readily be found, in our orthodox and learned Commentatours upon the reſpective places.

[a] 1 Tim.4.1.

[b] Mat.15.24.

Thus then we ſee what there is in the conſideration in hand, to plead the Originall and deſcent of the Scriptnres from God, and to difference them from all the writings of men, I mean ſuch as have been written by men, without the inſpiration and expreſſe guidance of the holy Ghoſt. Other writers and writings are timorous and tender of ſeeming contradictions: the Scriptures, and he that ſpeaketh in them, ſeem to delight in ſuch ſeemings, and *go on their way rejoycing*, notwithſtanding.

There remains only one Argument more, ariſing from the conſideration of the manner how things are carried in the Scriptures, which avoucheth their authority for divine, and is the eight in order. This is the holy and humble ingenuity, candour and ſimpliciey, which upon occaſion diſcover themſelves in the reſpective writings of thoſe, who were the *Amanuenſes* or penmen of the Scriptures. There is ſuch a lowly ſelf-denying frame and diſpoſition, ſuch a ſweet ſimplicity and ſubmiſſiveneſſe of ſpirit ever and anon obſervable in their writings, in publiſhing their own infirmities and weakneſſes, as well as other mens; yea the weakneſſes of their friends, and ſuch whom they greatly honour elſewhere upon occaſion, and both the one and the othe without the leaſt air or touch of any complement or vanity, without miniſtring unto men the leaſt occaſion to judge any ſuch thing of them, as that they ſhould bait their hooks with

ſpeaking

ſpeaking meanly or diſparagingly of themſelves, to catch the praiſes of other men; that, as it was ſaid of the *Almuggim* trees, of which *Solomon made pillars for the houſe of the Lord, there came no ſuch Almug trees, nor were ſeen unto this day* [a], ſo neither is there to be found any ſuch holy ingenuity or ſimplicity of heart in any other writer, or writers whatſoever, as are cleerly ſeen in thoſe, who had this *ſpirit of glory caſt upon them*, to be the ſecretaries of heaven, to communicate in writing thoſe bleſſed counſells of God contained in the Scriptures, unto the world. How often, upon occaſion, doth that great Prophet, that *man of God* (as he is called) *Moſes*, who had a favour from Heaven, which never man had but he, I mean to have *God ſpeak unto him face to face, as a man ſpeaketh unto his friend* [b]; how oft (I ſay) doth he upon occaſion, in his writings, weave in the relation of his own weakneſſes and miſcarriages in his hiſtory, as if he had not been the hiſtorian himſelf? yea the failings and miſcarriages of his houſe and family in his greateſt predeceſſours? In the third and fourth Chapters of *Exodus*, how doth he at large lay down the ſtory of his infidelity, and great averſneſſe, to ſubmit unto that calling, unto which he was called, and that in an extraordinary way, by God himſelfe? Towards the end of the fourth Chapter, he acknowledgeth his overſight and neglect of the ordinance of God, in not circumciſing his childe the eight day: and further relates how neer he was to the ſtroke of Gods diſpleaſure by reaſon of it. So *Numb.* 11. he records the ſhame of his diſtruſtfullneſſe, or at leaſt of the carnality of his conceit or apprehenſion of the power of God. So again, *Numb.* 20. he ingenuouſly relates, how deeply he incurr'd the diſpleaſure of God, by an angry and diffident ſmiting of the rock, inſtead of ſpeaking to it with a compoſed ſpirit, and faith (according to the tenour of his commiſſion) and withall, how God, becauſe of this his ſinne, pronounced this heavy ſentence againſt him (which not long after alſo he put into full execution) that he ſhould not bring his Congregation into the promiſed land. *And, the Lord ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, becauſe ye beleeved me not, to ſanctifie me in the eyes of the children of Iſrael, therefore ye ſhall not bring this Congregation into the land which I have given them* [b]. Yea, we may put down in account amongſt the fruits of his

[a] 1. King. 10. 12.

[b] Exod. 33. 11.

[a] Num. 11. 21, 22.

[b] Num. 20. 12.

humility and candour of spirit, that testimony which he gives unto himself of being *very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth*,[c]. For as the Apostle *Paul*, when upon occasion, he commended himself, or (in his own phrase) *gloried*, made no question but that he exposed himself to the disparagement of being counted a fool for so doing, and withall implieth, that had he not been hereunto *compelled* by the strong desire he had of their spirituall well-doing, to whom he writes, there should no appearance of such *a dead flie* have been seen in his *oyntment*; in like manner, *Moses* (doubtlesse) being a prudent, sober, and grave man (as his writings testifie in abundance) was not brought but by a strong hand of self-deniall, and by an excellency of desire to accommodate the world in matters of speciall importance, in succeeding generations, to stoop to this lure of folly and weakneſſe, I mean to rise up so high in his own praise and commendation.

[c] Num. 12. 3.

[a] Cor. 11. 11.

Nor doth he only freely and plainly relate things tending to his own disparagement, but upon the same occasion, *viz.* when the glory of God, and the after-information of the world required it, he knows neither brother, nor sister, nor the greatest, or most honourable of all his fore-fathers, but unpartially sacrificeth their reputations and honours also upon the service of the comfort and caution of the world, declaring in open and free history, how farre they acted from time to time beneath their excellency, being Saints and servants of the most high God. The prints and foot steps of like ingenuity in others of the same ingagement, are evident from place to place throughout the body of the Scriptures; and have been observed by others upon the like occasion. But expedition is a great part of our present intendment.

Now then, as *Nicodemus* said unto *Christ*, *Master, we know that thou art a Teacher come from Gods: for no man can doe these miracles which thou doest, except God were with him*[a]; so have we reason in abundance to conclude and say, concerning the Hagiographers we speak of (the Pen-men of the Scriptures,) no men could have gone so farre out of themselves in so savoury and sacred an ingenuity, had not God himself been their guide, and conductour in the way. Nor is it any waies worthy the first

[a] Joh. 3. 2.

fruits

fruits of a belief, that God would ever have ſtood by mortall men with ſo high an hand of wiſdom and grace, as to teach them that (I had almoſt ſaid) miraculous deportment with their pen, (for ſelf-deniall and humility,) had not their imployment been about his own moſt glorious affairs, and their calling to the work from himſelf; yea had he not intended this heavenly deportment and behaviour of theirs, as a ſacred character or impreſſion, of his own preſence with them in what they wrote, and for a confirmation of the ſoveraigne truth in them, unto the world. *But continue thou* (ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy*) *in the things which thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of,* knowing (*i.* conſidering) of whom thou haſt learned them [b]; cleerly implying, that the ſpirit of a Teacher, or writer, may be ſo excellent and rich, that a thorow taſte or knowledge of it, may well be a ground of confidence, that there is a ſubſtance of truth in what is either taught, or written by him. And (doubtleſſe) if the ſpirits of humane writers whatſoever, from the firſt to the laſt, were judiciouſly taſted, there would none of them be found ro relliſh with that inward ſweetneſſe, or richneſſe of contentment to the underſtanding of a man, wherewith the reſpective books and writings of the Scriptures, doe gratifie the intellectuall palates of their Readers, if they be intelligent and attentive in the reading of them. Lightneſſe, pride, aptneſſe to cenſure or exalt, according to ſelf-intereſts, or relations, an affectation of obſcurities, to be counted profound, a ſubtile plauſibleneſſe of carriage to gain Readers of the common ſtature for underſtanding, with the like, are the ingredients moſt frequently predominant in the conſtitution of the ſpirits of other Authours, and writers of books: nor is there any thing truly noble, or heaven-like, to be found in the beſt, or greateſt of them all. If all that which is truly excellent and deſireable in all the ſpirits or diſpoſitions of all humane writers whatſoever, could be extracted from all their writings together, and made up into one and the ſame conſiſtence; there might from the writings, either of *Moſes* alone, or of *Paul* alone, be drawn forth an extraction, or quinteſſence, incomparably more celeſtiall and divine, then it.

[b] 2 Tim. 3 14.

We might here have preſented you with another conſidera-

tion or argument (reducible to that head of discourse, from which we have argued hitherto) for the further eviction of that great conclusion, which we desire to bring forth into a cleer and perfect light, the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; *viz.* the admirable harmony and consent, for substance and truth of matter, which is found betwixt their respective pen-men and parts, from the first, to the last of them. They march like an Army in good array, where every man keepeth his rank, and none thrusteth, or troubleth his fellow. But because this is a consideration more frequently insisted upon, and opened, by others; and hath been already taken notice of (in part) by us, in a former Argument, we shall, for the present, wave the further plea of it.

Having finished those arguments and considerations of the first sort, drawn from the manner of the Scriptures, in their composure and frame, and which tend with an high hand to secure the world, that they are indeed royally descended, and know no Father, or Authour, either amongst men or Angels, whether good, or bad, but God only; let us in the next place advance such arguments and demonstrations, for our further confirmation in the same truth, which arise from their matter; I mean from the nature, property, and import, of the things themselves delivered, and held forth in them. These are somewhat more in number then the former. For 1. The glorious and absolute holinesse which they call the world unto. 2. The strong and potent tendencie in things here delivered unto godlinesse. 3. The like efficacious and soveraigne tendencie of things, unto self-deniall: to make men wholly forgetfull and neglective of themselves in outward things, upon occasion. 4. The penetrating or searching nature and property of the Scriptures; I mean into the hearts and spirits and consciences of men, *to separate the vile from the precious*, and to discover the hidden things of the greatest darknesse there. 5. The mighty efficacy and power they have, by the things which they teach, to inlarge, raise, and lift up the hearts of men, that are fallen, and sunk, and dead within them. 6. The like power which they have, by other ingredients, to trouble, astonish, and confound the hearts that are high, and full of confidence and security. 7. The transforming power which they

Ten Arguments drawn from the subject matter of the Scriptures, to prove their originall divine

they have, I mean to change and alter the natures and diſpoſitions and tempers of men; to turn both the hearts and waies of men upſide down. 8. That excellency of wiſedom, thoſe heights and depths of underſtanding, which are diſcovered in that great tranſaction of the Goſpel, as it is preſented unto the world in the Scriptures. 9. The great and wonderfull myſterioufneſſe of this evangelicall tranſaction. 10. And laſtly, The glorious and moſt tranſcendent importance of this tranſaction, by way of benefit and bleſſing upon the world; all theſe, eſpecially in a joint conſideration, doe, againſt, and above all contradiction and fear, evince the Scriptures to be from God.

The firſt Argument.

Firſt, That excellent ſpirit of holineſſe, which breaths in the faces of the ſouls and conſciences of men, out of many of the commands, motives, examples, and other expreſſions in the Scriptures, is a fair lineament in the face of God, and plainly bewraies his intereſt and hand in the framing of them.

Let me 1. (in a word) ſhew you what I mean by that holineſſe, which the Scriptures ſo ardently deſire to advance and propagate in the world. 2. I ſhall (with like brevity) acquaint you, how glorious and fearfull the Scriptures are in preſſing and perſwading unto holineſſe. 3. and laſtly, We will ponder the conſideration hereof a little, and ſee what it contributes towards our important deſigne.

For the firſt, Holineſſe, in the ſence we now ſpeak of it (for there are ſeverall ſignifications of the word) may be deſcribed after ſome ſuch manner as this: It is an honourable impreſſion, property, or quality in the rationall nature or being, which diſpoſeth the ſubject to an abſolute and utter ſeparation and abhorrency in affection, from whatſoever is ſinfull, as ſuch; (I mean, ſo farre as it is ſinfull.) And ſuch waies and actions which proceed from ſuch a principle as this, may be called *Holy*. We ſhall not now ſtand to examine or ſcan the deſcription, it being not ſo proper to the buſineſſe in hand. Holineſſe in God, ſeems to be that nature, attribute or property in him, which inclines him to move and act in all his wayes and diſpenſations, at the greateſt elongation and diſtance that can be imagined, from all unrighteouſneſſe whatſoever. In men and Angels, it imports ſuch a principle, which inclines them to an abſolute conformity with God,

God, in his waies and actions. That passage of the Psalme (with many others, where we finde righteousnesse and holinesse in conjunction) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works*[a], gives some testimony to the truth and propriety of the description. We shall not (for the present) lead you any further out of the way by following it, or by any narrow inquiring into the nature or property of holinesse, or how it differs from other graces. It is sufficient, as to the point in hand, to know, that the holinesse, which the Scriptures strive with so much importunity to ingage the world unto (as we shall see presently) is a conformity or likenesse unto God in that attribute or perfection of his nature, which inclines him to doe all things that he doth, like unto himself, like unto a God, that is, not only after the most exact and absolute manner in all points, without the omission or neglect of the least, or least considerable circumstance, that might adde beauty and perfection to it, but all this also with the greatest alienation of minde and affection from doing otherwise.

[a] Psal. 145. 17.

The next thing is to demonstrate and shew unto you, how, and at what rate the Scriptures groan, and travail (as it were) in pain, with the unholinesse, loosnesse, and prophanesse of the world: and how mightily they advance and lift up themselves, to advance holinesse amongst the sons and daughters of men; to transform the hearts and waies of men into the similitude and likenesse of that glorious attribute of holinesse, which is in God, and in all his waies.

There are three geat Engins especially (if we may so call them) which the Scriptures use, and by which they drive on this great and blessed designe of promoting holinesse in the world. The first, is made of precepts and commands: the second, of motives or arguments of perswasion: the third and last, of examples. It is true, all the three in strictnesse of speaking, and in a generall consideration, may be reduced to that one mentioned in the second place. Commands of holinesse from God, and so examples of holinesse, both from God and men, have the nature of motives unto holines: but by distinguishing them, we both provide the better for method and memory, and likewise follow the example of the holy Ghost himself, who still differenceth the

the precept from the motive, by which it is preſſed, and bound faſter and cloſer to the hearts and conſciences of men.

Let us firſt ſee how inſtant the Scriptures are upon the world with precepts and commands for holineſſe. *For I am the Lord your God* (ſaith he that ſpeaketh out of them unto the world) *ye ſhall therefore ſanctifie your ſelves, and ye ſhall be* holy, *for I am* holy. And again, *for I am the Lord which bringeth you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye ſhall therefore be* holy, *for I am* holy[a]: Injunctions expreſſed in the future tenſe of the Indicative mood [*ye ſhall be* holy, *&c.*] are moſt emphaticall and authoritative; importing, not ſimply the will or deſire of the commander; nor ſimply the duty of the commanded; but alſo the peremptorineſſe of the one, and the imminent danger of the other, if neglected. If we ſhould tranſcribe, and argue, theſe enſuing paſſages, *Lev.*19.2. *Lev.*20.7. 1 *Pet.*1.15,16. *Heb.*12. 14. 2 *Cor.*7 1. *Matth.*5.48. with many others of like conſideration and import (which we leave to your private obſervation) you would cleerly ſee how ſtrong and ſoar the Scriptures are in their injunctions and commands for holineſſe, upon the world. So that if the authority and intereſt of him, who ſeeks to order and umpire the world by the Scriptures, can doe any thing, men and women ſhall not be prophane, or unclean, but holy: theſe are at work with all their might, and with all their power, to make all holy.

[a] Lev. 11 44,45.

Secondly, Take we into conſideration alſo, with what potency, height, and variety of motive, and argument of perſwaſion, the Scriptures bow and bend themſelves, yea turn themſelves this way and that, and every way that lightly can be thought of, to commend the grace and exerciſe of holineſſ unto men; to intereſſe the hearts and affections of men and women, in the love, deſire, and ſtudy of it. There are ſcarce any of the commands lately pointed unto, which call for holineſſe, but are attended and guarded with their motives and incitements proper to them.

1. The Scripture preſſeth and perſwades unto holineſſe, by this conſideration, that *God* himſelf *is holy*. *Be ye holy, for I am holy* (ſaith he that ſpeaketh in the Scriptures, as we heard before from *Moſes*.) Now ſuppoſing (for the preſent, being yet but

upon the proof of it) that it is God himself who thus speaketh, of how soveraign an influence must this consideration, that *God is* **holy**, needs be upon the hearts and souls of men capable of it, to perswade unto holinesse? What! a mortall man, who is by nature but dust and ashes, and by miscarriage, a thousand degrees more imbased then so, to be like unto God? to have communion with him in so darling an Attribute as his **holinesse**? What? he that was descended so low, to ascend thus high? The Heathen themselves, when they studied and set themselves, to speak at the highest rate they knew how, in way of honour and commendation, whether of persons, or of actions, they usually expressed themselves, by affirming the one to be like unto God, and the other to render men like unto God. Their great Oratour *Cicero*, when he had in an Oration drawn the portraicture of the Emperour *Caesar*, as he intended, by the representation of a man performing such and such things highly vertuous and rare, closeth his sentence after this manner; *He that shall doe such things as these, I think him not to be a man, but judge him to be one most* **like unto God.** And so *Plato*, by way of motive unto men to be active in doing good unto as many as might be, expresseth himself thus τὸς πλείους ὠφελεῖν, ἐστι τῷ θεῷ ὁμοιοῦσθαι. i. *to be a generall benefactour, and to doe good unto many, is to become* **like unto God.**

*Hæc qui fecerit, hunc non hominem esse puto, sed simillimum Deo judico.*

2. The Scripture perswades and presseth unto **holinesse** upon this ground; *viz.* that men and women are brought into a capacity of being **holy**, by so high an hand of grace and vouchsafement from God, as the death of his only begotten Son. The Apostle *Peter* having injoyned Christians to be **holy** *in all manner of conversation, even as he that had called them was* **holy**, and to *passe the time of their sojourning here in fear* [a]; immediatly he subjoyns this by way of motive, or ingagement; *Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your Fathers; but by the precious bloud of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and* **Without** *spot* &c. [b] This also is a motive of wonderfull importance and power, where it is thorowly resented, and takes kindly upon the spirit, to perswade unto **holinesse**. It supposeth 1. that it is a priviledge, yea a great prerogative, for men that had been

[a] 1 Pet. 1. 17.

[b] vers. 18.

been in such a condition of bondage and slavery under sin, as they had been, to be so farre brought off from those terms of shame and misery, as (if they be willing to enter in by it) to have such an effectuall door open unto them, whereby to passe into the glorious liberty of **holinesse**. The Angels that are fallen, have no part or followship in such a priviledge as this: the iron gate of the irreversible decree of God is fast shut upon them: they are in no capacity of coming forth out of their dungeon of sin and misery, into the light and blessednesse of **holinesse**. And 2. it asserteth, that this priviledge, or capacity for them to become **holy**, was not procured or bought, nor procurable, or to be bought, for them, by such mean and contemptible things, as silver and gold, for which yet we know things of greatest worth and consequence in matters appertaining to this life, may be had, but *by the precious blood of Jesus Christ*, &c. implying, that the greatnesse of the price, by which a priviledge, liberty, or commodity in any kinde is purchased for a man, (especially by those, who are of wisedom and understanding sufficient not to over-purchase, not to *give* their *silver for that which is not bread*) is a proportionable ingagement upon the man, for whom this purchase is made, to improve this priviledge to the uttermost, as well for his benefit and advantage who hath made the purchase for him, as for his own. The price that hath been given to put the world into a capacity of **holinesse**. being no lesse, then *the precious blood of Jesus Christ*, that only sacred treasure, which either heaven or earth could afford, or furnish the Almighty with, for such a purchase, duly considered, is an astonishing weight of ingagement upon the world, to be **holy**.

3. The Scriptures call upon the world for **holinesse**, by the great voice of this consideration; that God, when he was free, hath yet made himself a mighty debtour, a debtour of infinite summes of treasure, unto the world, especially by those great and precious promises which he hath given unto it, concerning the life, and glory, and great things of the world to come, the everlasting injoyment and fruition of himself, and that upon the most desireable terms, that it is possible for a creature to injoy him; *viz.* so, as that he will become **all in all** unto it; that

is, not communicate himself by any means or mediation whatsoever, or joyn any creature whatsoever with himself, to make the blessednesse of him that shall injoy him, a compounded blessednesse, consisting partly of the benefit received from a creature, partly of what is derived unto it by the creatour; but will fill the whole capacity of him that shall enjoy him, with nothing but himself; so that his blessednesse shall have no ingredient at all in it to allay or qualifie it but it shall be wholly, purely, and entirely *God, all God*; who as he contains all things whatsoever, *per modum eminentiæ*, (as the School-men speak) by way of eminency, in his essence or in himself, Angels, men, joy, strength, life, peace, glory, and whatsoever is named not in this world only but in that also which is to come; so will he be this *all things*, after a farre more excellent, after a farre more incomparably excellent manner, to those that shall injoy him, then the things themselves would be, if they were injoyed by him. This is the last and most compleat estate and condition of blessednesse, whereunto the creature shall be brought; and wherein, being once entred and brought into it, he shall abide for eternity. But before his coming or bringing hither, he shall passe thorow the accomplishment and sweet enjoyment of many other the great and precious promises of God, as of being rais'd again from the dead, of having his vile body made like unto the glorious body of *Christ*, of living and reigning with *Christ* a thousand years, with many other of like glorious and blessed importance; all which notwithstanding shall at last run into that immense Ocean of blessednesse and glory which we speak of, and there be swallowed up, and lose themselvs and their names, as the faireſt and goodliest rivers doe, when once they are fallen into the main sea. But this by the way. But that the Scriptures doe (as it were) adjure the world unto **holinesse**, by the *great and precious promises* which God hath made, and wherein he stands ingaged unto the sons and daughters of men, is evident by that place formerly cited, 2 *Cor.* 7. *Having therefore these promises* (dearly beloved) *let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, perfecting* **holinesse** *in the fear of God*[a]; implying, that, however **holinesse** (especially in any considerable eminencie or *perfection*) carries a strong antipathy

[a] 2 Cor. 7. 1.

in

in it, to the corrupt natures and vile diſpoſitions of men; yet they who have ſuch an advantage over their hearts, ſuch an opportunity to make their corrupt natures turn head upon their vileneſſe and corruption, as the glorious *promiſes* of the Goſpel afford, ought in reaſon, and well may (by the improvement of the means before them) raiſe, and work up themſelves to an eminent degree and pitch of **holineſſe**: Yea this improvement of the promiſes we ſpeak of by men, I mean to an excellencie of *holineſſe*, ſeems to be one of the main ends or intents, on Gods part, why they were given. *Whereby* (ſaith *Peter*) *are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature*, &c. It is the richneſſe, the *exceeding greatneſſe, and preciouſneſſe* of the Goſpel-promiſes, which makes them a proportionable and apt means to communicate or impart the *Divine nature* (*holineſſe*) unto men. If a King ſhould deſire to raiſe a noble and princelike ſpirit, in a perſon of low and ordinary birth and breeding, his onely way were to adopt him for his ſon, and to declare him his ſucceſſour in his Throne. When *Saul* was anointed by the Prophet *Samuel* to be King over Iſrael, it is ſaid that as he turned himſelf to go from *Samuel, God gave him another heart*, i. an heart thoughtfull and conſiderative, how to rule, and act the part of a King; whereas the heart he had before, was but level'd to the occaſions and intereſts of a private man. I conceive that this rais'd and princelike heart was not *given* unto *Saul* by any miraculous or ſupernaturall inſpiration, or working, from God, but by an ordinary concurrence in the minde and ſpirit of *Saul* with that great providence of his towards him, in calling and anointing him to be a King. The conſideration hereof ſtriking effectually upon *Sauls* heart, being now diſcharged from his attendance upon *Samuel*, and ſo more free to take the impreſſion of this great occurrence home, it ſeems quite altered the frame and conſtitution of it, and made it Regall. The promiſes of the Goſpel thoroughly underſtood, conſidered and beleeved, cannot but *fulfill the joy* of him that gave them, in making his creature like unto himſelf, *holy*, as he is *holy*.

4. The Scriptures are ſo impatient of being denied what they

call for in this kinde (I mean in point of holineſſe) from the world, ſo unable to bear the world in an averſeneſſe hereunto, that they threaten the loſſe of the ſight and face of God, and therein, of all joy, and peace, and comfort for evermore, and conſequently the vengance of eternall fire, to all thoſe that are prophane, or unholy. *Follow peace with all men* (ſaith the Apoſtle in a place formerly cited) and **holineſſe**: *without which*, i. without which **holineſſe** not, without which *peace* (as is evident by the Article in the Greek, which being of the maſculine gender, agree's with ἁγιασμὸς, *holineſſe*, not with εἰρήνην, *peace*) *no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, i. ſhall injoy him (as the word commonly imports in Scripture) or, come where he is, *to behold the glory, which God hath given him*; wherein himſelf ſeems to place the great felicity of the Saints [c]. This motive is in the hand of the Scripture as a rod of iron, to batter and break in pieces, all that ſtubborneſſe and contradiction, which is in the natures and hearts of men againſt **holineſſe**.

[b] Heb. 12. 14.

[c] Joh. 17. 24.

There are ſeverall other motives, by the meditation whereof the Scripture is wont to urge and preſſe hard upon the world for **holineſſe**; as ſometimes, the conſideration of the beauty of it; otherwhile, it holds forth the glory of it, yea, it oft calls it by the name of glory [d]; again, ſometimes the peace, ſometimes the joy of it are commended unto the world; and all to inflame the hearts of men and women with deſires after it. By all which, and eſpecially by thoſe that have been ſomewhat more largely inſiſted upon, it fully appears, that the face of the Scriptures is ſet like an adamant, fully ſet to exalt holineſſe in the world, to make the generation of the ſons and daughters of men, a generation of ſons and daughters unto God, by being *partakers of the divine nature*, **holy** *as he is* **holy**.

[d] 2 Cor. 3. 18. Eph. 5. 27. *&c.*

So that we ſhall not need to inſiſt at all upon the third particular mentioned; *viz.* the examples of perſons eminent in holineſſe, over whoſe names and memories the Scriptures rejoyce ſo much, and ſeem to embalm them with honour, on purpoſe that being preſerved, the world by them might learn to love and *follow* **holineſſe** in all ſucceeding generations. The ſtories of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, as alſo of all the *holy* Prophets

Prophets and Apoſtles, with many others that are upon Scripture record; *ſpeak plainly* and *without* any *parable*, that the Scripture deſigne is, to make the **holineſſe** of theſe men to propagate in the world, the men themſelves being dead. So that the light of this Truth ſhines cleerly from all quarters of the Scriptures, and is ſpread round about us on every ſide; that **holineſſe** amongſt men, is one of the great prizes, that they run for, and contend and ſtrive about with the world.

Now then (in a word) let us weigh and conſider, what we have gotten all this while, to ſtrengthen the hand of our belief, and ſecure our deareſt ſouls, that the Scriptures preach'd unto us, and profeſs'd by us, are indeed from God.

If we ſhall but firſt call to minde, what that holineſſe is, the advancement whereof in the world we have demonſtrated at large, to be one of the great deſignes of the Scriptures; and 2. with what ſtrength and vehemencie and raiſedneſſe of affection and endeavour, this deſigne we ſpeak of, is advanc'd and carried on, by, or in, the Scriptures; the conſideration (doubtleſſe) will amount to a moſt effectuall demonſtration and conviction, that the Scriptures themſelves are from God. For, 1. Let me ask; doth the advancement of **holineſſe** in the world, look like an Intereſt of man, or of any unclean ſpirit? hath it any communion with the naturall temper, diſpoſition, or deſires of theſe? or hath it not the *expreſſe image and ſuperſcription* of the glorious God upon it, and look like the deſigne of the *moſt holy*? It is a ſaying in naturall Philoſophy; that it is *naturaliſſimum opus viventis, generare ſibi ſimile*; it is the moſt naturall act or work of every living thing, to produce another like unto it ſelf. It is ſaid, *Gen.* 5. that *Adam begat a ſon in his own image, and after his likeneſſe*[a], and *Gen.* 1. it is ſaid, *that God created man in his own image, and likeneſſe alſo*[b]. If ſuch an **holineſſe** as the Scriptures ſet themſelves with all their might to exalt and propagate in the world, be the *image* of man, or of any lying or deluding ſpirit, let either the one or the other be reputed the Authour of that doctrine or writing by which the propagation of it is with ſo high an hand (as you have heard) attempted in the world: but if it be the image of God, if it carries an abſolute and perfect reſemblance of his nature in it, *What need*

[a] Gen 5.3.
[b] 1.26,27.

We

*We any more Witneſſes?* Why ſhould we not conclude without any diffidence or doubtfulneſſe of ſpirit at all, that he, and none other is the authour of them?

Nay ſecondly (that which is yet further conſiderable) the holineſſe over which the Scriptures ſo much rejoyce, is ſo far from holding any proportion or correſpondence with the nature or diſpoſition of man; in this eſtate of corruption and ſin, wherein he now languiſheth even unto death (much more of any creature more abaſed then man) that it profeſſeth enmity, and open hoſtility againſt it; and ſeeketh to turn the temper and waies and courſe thereof upſide down. Whereas on the contrary, it is not only of the moſt rich and full conſiſtencie with the nature of God ſimply, but with that property, attribute, or perfection in his nature, which is his darling, and wherein his ſoul mightily delights (as was lately obſerv'd) as being that, which inclines him to act and put forth himſelf in all the reſt, according to the moſt abſolute and perfect rules for their reſpective actings, and with the greateſt deteſtation of doing otherwiſe. Now then (I beſeech you conſider it) is it any waies like, nay is it poſſible, for the nature, heart, or ſoul of man, which are corrupt, vile and ſinfull, to labour and travail (eſpecially at ſo high a rate, as we have ſhewed you the Scriptures doe) with ſuch a pure and glorious conception, as this of holineſſe? *Who can bring a clean thing, out of an unclean* (is Jobs queſtion) and his anſwer is, *not one*[c]. *Doe men gather grapes of thorns, or figgs of thiſtles*; (ſaith our Saviour) implying, not only or ſimply, that they doe not ſo, either *gather grapes of thorns, or figgs of thiſtles*; but that there is an abſolute repugnancie in nature, that they ſhould doe either: there being no naturall principle or aptneſſe, either in the *thorn* to bring forth *grapes*, or in the *thiſtle*, to bring forth *figgs*. Which reaſoning of his ſtands upon this known maxime or rule; that where there is not a propriety of cauſe, there cannot be a particularity of effect. So then, there being nothing, no principle in the nature, ſoul, or ſpirit of man, that hath any compliance in point of cauſality, with ſuch a deſigne of holineſſe as we ſpeak of, and as we found driven in the Scriptures, but all things there riſing up to the contrary, evident it is, that the deſigne was new begotten or bred there.

[c] Job 14.4.

there. It is true, there was a time when *Saul alſo Was among the Prophets*, and prophecied, as other Prophets of the Lord did; upon which occaſion that interrogative Proverb firſt took place: *Is Saul alſo among the Prophets?* But, that is to be conſidered in this caſe, that though *Saul* indeed prophecied, yet he did it, as being more then himſelf when he did it; the text ſaith, that *the Spirit of God came upon him*, and that then *he went prophecying*: ſo that all this propheticall deportment in *Saul*, whether in words, or expreſſions otherwiſe, was from a cauſe or principle, every way proportionable to it, I mean the Spirit of God. And in ſuch a ſence, I grant, that men, notwithſtanding the impurity and unholineſſe of their natures and ſpirits, may yet conceive a deſigne of propagating **holineſſe** in the world, yea and bring forth alſo: but in this caſe evident it is, that the deſigne ſhould be from God, and not from man, 1 Sam 19.23, 24.

If it be objected and ſaid: but may not men by the light of nature, and help of the law of God written in their hearts, by an improving, refining, and carrying up to a greater height and perfection, thoſe naturall impreſſions of the beauty, lovelineſſe, and excellency of vertue in every kinde, which are in them, as they may by ſtudy and ſtrength of contemplation, attain unto ſuch a frame of heart, as out of which they may very ſeriouſly, and with great earneſtneſſe of affection and deſire, ingage themſelves in ſuch a deſigne of *holineſſe*, as that which hath been repreſented unto you in the Scriptures? Doe not many Heathen Philoſophers, and morall men, as *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, and others, commend vertue, which they call perfection, in all a mans waies, thoughts, words, and works, to the Heavens, exhorting and perſwading all men to it? Why then may not the Scriptures, proceed from one or more ſuch men as theſe, and ſo not from God? To this I anſwer three things. *Objection*

1. Be it granted, that Philoſophers and ſome of natures prime Scholars, both for naturall and morall knowledge and wiſedom, have done that which is aſcribed to them in the objection, have recommended vertue and perfection (as they call both the one and the other) unto the world, and have ſeriouſly deſired and ingaged themſelves to reduce the world to thoſe terms of morall excellency, which they preſcribe; yet if this be *Anſw.* 1.

ſuppoſed and granted concerning men, that they have appeared in the world in ſuch glory as this, have ſought to make the world righteous and holy (in their ſence) is not the ſame much more to be preſumed, and ſuppoſed concerning God, *viz.* that he alſo hath appeared for the ſame purpoſe, and upon terms much more glorious in this kinde, then they? Will God come ſhort of men, in any vertue, in any praiſe, or glory? nay as he reaſons himſelf concerning himſelf in another caſe, *Iſa.66.* (both as the former Tranſlation, and *Junius* and *Tremellius* out of the Originall, read, and expound the words:) *Shall I cauſe to travail, and not bring forth? ſhall I cauſe to bring forth, and ſhall be barren, ſaith thy God?* Iſa.66.9. *i.* as *Junius* interprets it, *Qui aliis ſum gignendi Author, annon ipſe gignerem? I that make others to bring forth, ſhould not I bring forth my ſelf?* ſo may we ſay of him in this: Shall he cauſe others, even Heathen men, and ſuch as are ſtrangers to him (in compariſon) to bring forth precepts, and directions, and exhortations unto things that are excellent for the behoof and benefit of the world; and ſhall he himſelf be barren, and not doe ſomewhat in the ſame kinde, to advance the eſtate and condition of the world likewiſe? That it is he who originally (at leaſt, if not immediately alſo) gives both wiſdom and underſtanding unto thoſe heathen we ſpeak of, and likewiſe that diſpoſition and frame of will, between which all thoſe books and writings have been begotten and ſet forth unto the world, whereby they call the world to perfection (in their notion) is not to be queſtioned: for he it is *that gives life and breath, and all things unto all.*

Now then, this being granted and ſuppoſed, that God, is ſtudious and carefull as well as men, to nurture and train up the world in things that are excellent, certainly he hath his means; 1. his Laws, his Precepts, his Inſtructions, his Incouragements for ſuch a purpoſe, and theſe extant, and to be had in the world, as well as they. If ſo, then queſtionleſſe, thoſe means in this kinde, thoſe Laws, Precepts, Inſtructions, Incouragements, that are of the moſt exact calculation, of greateſt efficacie and power amongſt all their fellows, for the carrying on and advancement of this great deſigne, I mean of carrying up the world unto perfection, muſt needs be looked upon as the means of God; the means of

his

his immediate appointment and designation for the work. So then if this one thing further be but granted, (which I presume no man hath the least colour, no nor yet the least thought of heart to deny) *viz.* that the Scriptures have the preheminencie above all other writings whatsoever, in strength, authority and power, to teach the world all the waies of excellencie and perfection, it undeniably follows, that then these Scriptures are from God. This is the first thing we answer to the objection propounded: though men have done the best they can, and this possibly very considerable in the kinde, to exalt a thing somewhat like holinesse in the world; yet except it should appear, that somewhat that hath been done by them in this kinde, hath a greater and more efficacious tendencie hereunto, then the Scriptures; the consideration is so farre from weakning the Divine Originall of them, that it rather confirms and gives testimony to it. But

*Answ.* 2. 2. I answer yet further: that that morall excellency or perfection, which the Philosophers, and learned men of the world, have laboured in their writings to promote amongst men, is quite another thing, and of a farre inferiour nature to that holinesse which he, who in, and by the Scriptures, hath to doe with the world, labours by them, to fill the world withall.

**Holinesse**, which is the Scripture designe upon the world, differs from that morall excellency and perfection (so called) wherewith Philosophers were desirous to plant the world, severall waies; but chiefly these three. 1. The **holinesse**, which the Scriptures set themselves to exalt in the world, is a perfect and intire *holinesse*, it wants no limb or member to complete it: there is never an impression of worth and excellency imaginable, whether in relation to God or men, whereof the heart or soul of man is capable, never a strein of action or deportment in what case, or upon what occasion soever, that is truly comely and honourable for men, but is compriz'd and comprehended in that **holinesse**, which the Scriptures recommend unto the world: But for that holinesse (if you will needs so call it) or rather that morall perfection, which is of humane recommendation unto men, take the faireſt and most perfect draughts that ever were made of it by any, you will finde it halt and maimed, many parts

or pieces of it wanting. *I have ſeen an end* (ſaith *David* unto God) *of all perfection: but thy commandement, or thy Law, is exceeding broad*[a]. A man may ſee from the *Dan* to the *Beerſheba* of that morall perfection, which men either have, or ſhall at any time, invite the world unto; a man may fadome and comprehend it, gather it into his underſtanding, and be able to ſay, here I have it, the whole element of it; which plainly ſhews the imperfection of it: but the compaſſe and extent of that perfection or **holineſſe** which the Law of God, the Scriptures, call the world unto, is ſo vaſt and large, that the reaſon, conſcience and underſtanding of a man, when they have ſpent themſelves in travell to make a perfect diſcovery of this continent, and the particularities of it, cannot yet come to the utmoſt bounds and limits of it: There is a *Terra incognita*, an unknown land of **holineſſe** in the Scriptures, on which no mans underſtanding ever ſet foot to this day. *Who knows* (ſaith the ſame Prophet) *how oft he offendeth?* or (as our laſt Tranſlation hath it) *Who can underſtand his errour?* If a man could comprehend the Law of God in the whole extent and compaſſe of it, he might be able to ununderſtand his errours, and to know *how oft he offendeth.* The *Jews* have this ſaying, that *God left nothing in all the World, wherein he gave not ſome commandment.*

[a] Pſal. 119.96.

Pſal. 19.12.

2. The Scripture holineſſe, differs from that perfection which the choiſeſt of men have deſired to promote in the world; in the purity or cleanneſſe of it. It hath not only all the parts of *holineſſe*, all things appertaining unto the greateſt excellencie or perfection, that men are capable of (as was noted in the former difference) but it hath no ingredient or mixture in it, of any thing that is repugnant unto true **holineſſe**, or perfection; it is an *holineſſe*, which (as we uſe to ſay of ſolid and compact bodies) is *plena ſui*, 'tis full of it ſelf, and hath nothing heterogeneall within it. Whereas the Philoſophers *ointment*, hath many *dead flies* in it, which make the whole compoſition, if not to ſtink rightout, yet to ſend forth ſuch a ſavour, as by which it may be evidently ſcented and diſcerned, to be the compoſition of men, and not of God. *Plato* in that perfection or holineſſe which he commends unto the world, beſides many other things condemned by the Scriptures, as unlawfull, allowes that unnaturall

turall pollution which they call *pæderaſtia*, ſpoken of *Rom.* 1.27. *Ariſtotle* makes ſeverall of his vertues of ſuch things, habits and actions, which the Scriptures make vices and ſinnes: as 1. He makes νέμεσις, *i.* grief or indignation at the proſperity of unworthy men, to be a vertue; which the Scripture prohibits, as a thing ſinfull and unworthy, *Pſal.* 37. So again, he makes a vertue of that which he calls ἀβωμολία, *i.* a diſpoſition to jeſting, or lightneſſe of diſcourſe, which the Scripture expreſly prohibits in the very terme, *Epheſ.* 5. So he makes his μεγαλοψυχία, which he defines to be, the judging of a mans ſelf worthy of great things, when he is ſo, another of his vertues; a diſpoſition which we know the Scriptures doe not allow in men of the greateſt worth and excellencie under heaven. *So likewiſe ye* (ſaith our Saviour to his Diſciples) *When you have done all thoſe things that are commanded you, ſay, We are unprofitable ſervants: We have done that which was our duty to doe.* &c. If you look into *Seneca*, you ſhall finde indeed many excellent precepts of morality, with motives and arguments very conſiderable, to perſwade to them; but you ſhall finde many a *dead flie* in this mans box alſo; and among others, you ſhall finde him commending that as a vertuous reſolution in *Cato*, rather to lay violent hands upon himſelf, and deſtroy his own life, then to fall into the hands of his enemy *Cæſar*, though there was little queſtion but that he ſhould have had his life, yea and honour too, from him; A practice which the Authour of the latter book of the *Maccabees*, commends likewiſe in one *Razis* a Jew (2 *Mac.* 14. *ver.* 41. to the end) by which character (among ſome others of like nature) Proteſtant Divines have unanimouſly concluded, that thoſe books are not Canonicall, or of divine inſpiration. If you ſearch into all the greateſt maſters of morality that ever nature ſet up to teach the world perfection, you will finde even in thoſe of the greateſt and choiſeſt accompliſhments amongſt them, many things taught under the names of vertue and perfection, which are imperfections, and things truly diſhonourable to the nature of man. This is that which the holy Ghoſt himſelf ſeems to take notice of concerning them, *Rom.* 1. *They became vain in their thoughts*, or reaſonings (Διαλογισμοῖς) *and their fooliſh heart was darkned; profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they*

Rom. 1. 27.

Pſal. 37. 1, &c.

Eph 5 4

Luk. 17. 10.

2 Mac. 14 41.

Rom. 1. 21, 22.

*became fools. Professing themselves* teachers of perfection, they taught the world imperfection, and things unworthy of them. But if we look into the Scriptures, we shall finde that they teach holinesse and perfection so, and upon such tearms, that they teach nothing else; they teach no unholy or imperfect thing with them. As *Solomon* hath a saying, *Prov.* 10. *The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.* So the Scriptures endeavour to make men holy, and they adde no unholinesse, nothing that defileth with it. *The Law of the Lord* (saith *David*, speaking of the Scriptures, according to their growth in his dayes) *The Law of the Lord is perfect*: and presently after, *the Commandment of the Lord is pure*: and again, *the fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever. The fear of the Lord is clean*, i. that reverence and fear of God which is taught in the Scripture, or, which is conceived and begotten in the souls and consciences of men according to the tenour of Scripture commands, leads a man to no impure or unclean action, nay restrains him from all such: and therefore *it endureth for ever*, i. prepares and qualifies a man for a blessed eternity. For as sin and death, *i.* the losse of being, are of kin, the one making way for the other: so are righteousnesse and life, or perpetuation of being, the one is a foundation proper for God to build the other upon. But this by the way. You see then a 2. plain difference, between that holinesse which the Scripture teacheth, and that which is, or can be taught by men, otherwise then by the Scriptures; the one is pure and clean, the other adulterate, and mixt with unholinesse.

Prov. 10. 22.

Psal. 19. 7, 8, 9.

3. (And lastly, to this particular) That **holinesse** or perfection which the Scriptures so much magnifie, and seek to adorn and blesse the world withall, consists (the greatest and most considerable part of it,) in the due deportments and carriages of the heart and soul towards God immediately; in such inward impressions, or dispositions, which make a man meet for the enjoyment of God in a way of friendship and delightfull communion and converse: the knowledge of God and of his will, and counsells; the love of God, confidence of the love of God towards him, upon rationall and solid grounds; hope or expectation of good from him, dependance upon him for the receiving

receiving of all good in waies of righteouſneſſe and honour, with many more of like conſideration; all which qualifie and furniſh the creature for communion with God; put him into ſuch a poſture, that God may take a pleaſure and holy contentment to hold correſpondencie with him; and without which men were no more capable or meet either for communion with, or injoyment of, God, then the wilde beaſts of the wilderneſſe, are for the ſociety or acquaintaince of wiſe and ſober men. Whereas, if we peruſe the beſt models and draughts of that perfection and excellencie, which have come from men unto the world, and ſhall conſider the particularities of them, you will finde very little, very few things directed or injoyned of any ſuch tendencie as this; the main body or bulk of their writings conſiſting of ſuch precepts and Inſtructions, whoſe conſtitution and frame ſtand either for the regulating of men in their civill and morall deportments in the world, one towards another, and amongſt themſelves, or elſe for the compoſing and ordering their naturall affections and inclinations, in reference to themſelves, partly that they may receive a teſtimony of honour from the world, as of being vertuous, wiſe, and worthy men; and avoid the ſhame and diſhonour of the contrary: partly to prevent thoſe inconveniencies, in their eſtates, bodies, friends, poſterity, *&c.* which many times fall heavy upon men of diſſolute and diſordered lives; partly alſo, to nouriſh and maintain a certain calmneſſe and tranquillity of conſcience within; which they found by experience was troubleſome and tormenting unto them, when they had been wicked and vile in any way or practiſe of ſin againſt the light and dictates of it, as the Apoſtle himſelf intimates, *Rom.* 2. 15. Rom, 2. 14, 15.
In the writings and works of ſuch men as we ſpeak of, you may finde many things worthy conſideration, in reference to their ends: but as for either rules or directions, or much urging or preſſing any thing, of any proper and direct tendency to prepare and ſanctifie men for the immediate worſhip of God, or for any ſpeciall and comfortable communion with him, there is not the proportion of a *gleaning after the vintage*, nor of *the ſhaking of an olive tree, after the gathering of olives* is paſt. *Two or three berries* (ſaith *Iſaiah*) *in the top of the uttermoſt bough*; Iſa. 17. 6.

*and*

*and four or five in the outmoſt fruitfull branches thereof:* ſo there may be here a little, and there a little, a few ſcatter'd notions of ſuch a tendencie as we ſpeak of, to be found here and there in theſe writings: but what they do in this kinde, they do as if they did it not: nor is it much conſiderable what they do. This for the third (and laſt) difference, between that holineſſe, the advancement whereof is the darling deſigne of the Scriptures in the world; and that morall perfection, or vice-holineſſe (as we may properly enough call it) which nature hath ingaged ſome of the moſt towardly of her ſons to propagate, as they were able, in the world. And ſo much alſo for the ſecond thing by way of anſwer to the objection propounded: that morall excellencie which Philoſophers and learned men of the world, have laboured in their writings to promote amongſt men, is quite another thing, of a farre inferiour nature and worth, to that holineſſe, which he that ſpeaks out of the Scriptures unto the world, would willingly breath into the hearts and lives of men. So that the Divine Originall of the Scriptures, is no waies prejudiced in the evidence and clearneſſe of it, by any ſuch conſideration as this; that men either have, or may deſire and endeavour, to ſet the ſame plant in the world. But,

*Anſw.* 3. 3. (And laſtly) though the plant of *holineſſe* we ſpeak of ſhould be found the ſame, which both the Scriptures, and men in their writings, joyntly labour and endeavour to plant, and make to grow and flouriſh in the world, yet the different art, method and means, between them, I mean which he uſeth, who plants, in, and by the Scriptures, and thoſe that goe about the ſame buiſineſſe and work in other writings, do abundantly demonſtrate, that he that plants by the one, is God; and they that plant by the other, are but men. I ſhall cleare the difference, by giving inſtance only in three particulars, (whereas many more might readily be inſiſted upon.)

1. Men doe not, cannot with any ſhew or colour of truth, plead any ſuch ingagements lying upon the world, by reaſon of any ſuch love or kindneſſe that they have ſhewn to it, why the world ſhould hearken unto their voice in this kinde, or hearken unto the Law of their mouth, as he both can and doth, that teacheth

teacheth *holineſſe* in the Scriptures. *Plato* cannot ſay, nor can *Ariſtotle* or *Seneca*, or any other of the great Philoſophers of the world, ſay (nor doe any of them ſay) that they ſo loved the world, and that when it was their enemy, *that they gave their only begotten ſonnes for it.* They have no ſuch golden cords as this, wherewith to draw the hearts of men againſt their native diſpoſitions and deſires, to comport with their inſtructions or exhortations unto vertue. This Scepter of love, wherewith the hearts of men moſt delight to be commanded and overruled, is one of the royalties appropriate to his throne, who by the hand of the Scriptures impoſeth the tax (or benevolence rather) of holineſſe upon the world.

2. Nor doe they, that ſummon and invite the world to excellency and perfection in other writings, propoſe unto men any ſuch prizes, any ſuch crowns, ſuch Kingdoms, to ingage them to run the race of *holineſſe*, as he doth, who makes his addreſſements unto the world in this behalf out of the Scriptures: if they ſhould, the world would laugh them to ſcorn, as knowing them unable altogether to make good their ingagements in this kinde. *Will the ſonne of Jeſſe* (ſaith *Saul* to his ſervants, ſtanding about him) *give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thouſands* &c. *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* doe not ſo much as pretend to the Lordſhip of life and immortality, nor to the right of diſpoſing the great things of the world to come. 1 Sam. 22.7.

3. (And laſtly,) Nor have the ſons of men, who plead the cauſe of that excellency which they hold forth unto the world, any ſuch priſons, or torments to threaten: they have no worm that never dieth, no fire that never goeth out, no pit without a bottom, no lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone for ever, wherewith to puniſh thoſe, who ſhall rebell againſt the Laws of their diſcipline and inſtruction. Sometimes they ſpeak of the miſeries and torments which wicked men are like to ſuffer after death; but at meer peradventure, and Poet-like, ſo as more to delight the fancies, then to ſtrike or trouble the conſciences of men. The Hell of Philoſophers, is but like the Hell of the Poets, which is an Hell to play and make ſport withall: it is the Scripture Hell, that makes the hearts, and ſouls, and conſciences, and all that is in men, to quake and tremble.

This then is the first demonstration that the Scriptures are from God, arising from the nature or propertie of the subject matter thereof, *viz.* the holinesse of the commands: together with the waies and means wherein they addresse themselves unto the world, to procure obedience unto their commands.

A second consideration springing from the same root, and tending to a further demonstration of the same truth, is the strong and potent tendencie unto **godlinesse**, which is found in many of the main carriages and passages of the Scriptures, and Gospel it self. The Scriptures as they drive a glorious designe of holinesse (and that with an high hand of means and ingagements) upon the world (as we have heard) so are they every whit as much bent and intent upon another, *viz.* the advancement of **godlinesse** in the world. Insomuch that the Apostle *Paul* describing the nature and property of the Gospel in a kinde of periphrasis, calls it *a doctrine according unto* **godlinesse**.

1 Tim. 6. 3. *If any man teach otherwise, and consenteth not unto the wholesome words of our Lord Christ, and to the doctrine which is according unto* **godlinesse**, *he is puft up and knoweth nothing* &c. By *the doctrine according unto* **godlinesse**, he cleerly means the Gospel, that body or frame of truths, precepts, promises, and threatnings, which is generally known to us by the name of the Gospel. Now this he calls *a doctrine according unto* **godlinesse**, because the nature, constitution, and composure of it is such, as if he that framed it, had intended, the exaltation of **godlinesse** by it in the world; it every waies so suits and answers such a designe as this. As God called *David a man after his own heart*, or according to

Acts 13 22. his own heart, because he was willing to *fulfill all his will* or pleasure; So supposing **godlinesse** were a person, endued with reason and understanding, the Gospel might be called a doctrine after the heart thereof, because it is set and bent to fulfill all the will and pleasure of it, 1. To doe whatsoever such a person would wish or desire, for its exaltation and advancement in the world. And in this respect also it is call'd the my-

1 Tim. 3 16. stery of **godlinesse**, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. *And without controversie, great is the mystery of* **godlinesse**: and *Tit.* 1. 1. it is called, *the truth*

Tit. 1. 1. *which is after* **godlinesse**, or, according to godlinesse (in the sence declared.) Now the Gospell is call'd a *mysterie*, or, *the*

*mystery*

*mystery of* **godlineſſe**, and the myſteriouſneſſe of it affirmed to be great, becauſe,as it is a doctrine,made (as it were) for the honour and dignity, and promotion of **godlineſſe**, ſo is it a doctrine, or pile of learning, which conſiſts of ſuch truths, and of ſuch ſhews, carriages, and connexions of things,that are very far remote from the common thoughts, reaſons, and underſtandings of men; ſuch as the wiſeſt and moſt inquiring men under heaven would never have diſcovered or once thought upon, had they not been revealed from heaven by God himſelf unto them. But for the more full opening and cleering the demonſtration in hand, we will obſerve the ſame method in the further handling of it,which we obſerved,in the former: And 1. Shew you what **godlineſſe** is. 2. How mightily intent the Scriptures are, to lift up the horn of it in the world, to propagate and magnifie it in the hearts and lives of men. 3. (And laſtly) We will briefly ponder and weigh the conſideration, that we may the better apprehend what there is in it to prove the truth of that concluſion we ſeek after,*viz.* that the Goſpel is from God.

For the firſt of theſe: That **godlineſſe** which the Scriptures bend themſelves with all their might to ſet up and magnifie in the world (as indeed there is none other but this, truly ſo called) is a kinde of heavenly impreſſion, or propenſion in the heart and ſoul of a man, which inclines, and is apt to carry it in all the motions and tendencies of it upon God, or towards God. 1. To cauſe it to remember God and his glory in all the actings and workings thereof, and to raiſe, frame and order theſe in a regular and due proportion thereunto. As we ſee there is a naturall impreſſion or quality of heavineſſe in a ſtone, and in all other heavy bodies, which directs and carries them in their motions in a ſtreight line to the center of the earth, when, or as farre as, impediments unto theſe motions are remov'd out of the way: and ſo again,there is a contrary impreſſion of levity or lightneſſe, in fire, whoſe property is to carry this body in the tendency and motion of it towards the circumference: ſo there is in ſome mens hearts and ſouls, a gracious and heavenly propenſion, which makes them hang and lean God-wards, and in their actions and motions to look towards him, and his glory, and to comply with them; And this propenſion or inclination in the

ſoul, we (together with the Scriptures) call **godlineſſe.**

That **godlineſſe** is a grace or gracious diſpoſition in the ſoul diſtinct from *holineſſe* (in the nature, though not in the ſubject of it) appears, 1. In that *holineſſe*, is often aſcribed unto God, yea more frequently (I conceive) then any other Attribute, at leaſt as frequently as any: but **godlineſſe** is no where attributed unto him. He is often ſaid to be *holy*, but never ſaid to be **godly.** It is true there is a nature or diſpoſition in God, which inclines him in all his actions and motions to comply with himſelf and with his own glory, as well as with the good of the creature; as there is in *godly* men, beſides that principle of **godlineſſe** we ſpeak of, there is a naturall impreſſion which inclines them alſo to comport with themſelves, and with their own bleſſedneſſe and glory, as well as with God and his glory: but as this diſpoſition in men, would very improperly be called *manlineſſe* or *menlineſſe*; ſo neither doth the holy Ghoſt, take any pleaſure to call the diſpoſition in God we ſpeak of, by the name of **godlineſſe**; but rather chooſeth to expreſſe and diſcover it ſome other way. Now if it were altogether of the ſame import, or the ſame thing with holineſſe, there can hardly any reaſon be given, why holineſſe ſhould be ſtill ſo frequently and familiarly aſcribed unto God, and **godlineſſe** not at all. 2. That there is a difference between them, appears by this; that they are exhorted unto, or enjoyned by the holy Ghoſt as two ſeverall graces. *Seeing therefore* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter*) *that all theſe things muſt be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought ye to be in all holy converſation, and* **godlineſſe.** So that *holineſſe* of converſation, and **godlineſſe**, or *godlineſſe* of *converſation*, are two diſtinct things: otherwiſe we muſt ſay, that the holy Ghoſt in one and the ſame ſentence exhorts twice to one and the ſame thing, and that in difference of words, as if there were two: which I ſuppoſe cannot be ſhewed in all the Scripture beſides.

The difference between the two ſiſter graces, **godlineſſe** and *holineſſe* (becauſe ſome may deſire to know this by the way) may be thus conceived. *Holineſſe* (in the moſt proper, and ordinary acception of the word) is a gracious diſpoſition, inclining the heart or ſoul, where it reſides, unto actions and waies eminently righteous and juſt, with a reall abhorrency of the contrary,

contrary, or whatsoever is sinfull. **Godlinesse** is a disposition, which inclines the person, in whose soul it taketh place, to act for God, and to make the advancement of his glory, the supreme end of their waies and actions. *Holinesse* may be compared to the lustre, or brightnesse which is in gold: **godlinesse**, to that weightinesse, or that propension in it, which, in the motion of it, carries it towards the center. *Holinesse* respects the nature and quality of the action, and ingageth to a serious and zealous rectitude in these: **godliness** respects the end of the action, and carries the Agent in his intentions herein, upon God; so that though their natures differ, yet the difference is such, that it plainly shews, that they are never divided in their subject, but that wheresoever the one is, the other must needs be also. God never stirs up the hearts of men, truly and seriously to desire, or imbrace, waies that are excellent indeed, but he stirs them up also to make him and his glory the soveraigne end of them: yea he seldom or never stirs up men effectually and upon the termes specified, to desire such waies, or things as we speak of, but he doth it by putting the propension of **godlinesse** first into them. When we finde a desire in them to act for God and his glory, then, and seldome or never till then, will men bethink themselves to purpose, of doing things that are excellent indeed. Reasons hereof might be given, but the digression would be too burthensome to the discourse: This little that hath been said concerning the difference, between *holinesse* so much spoken of in the former argument, and **godlinesse** in this, is rather too much on the bye. This then for the first thing propounded, what that **godliness** is, which the Scriptures seek to fill the world withall.

The second thing, was, briefly to consider how, and after what rate of zeal and endeavour, and to what height the Scripture seeks to build up the world in that heavenly affection we speak of, and call **godliness**. 1. It urgeth and presseth upon the consciences of men for it, by way of precept and command: yea 2. It presseth for it upon these terms, universally, I mean in all their waies, works and doings. I put these two together, because I finde them together; 1 *Cor.*10. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye doe, doe all to the glory of God.* Ye see 1 Cor. 10. 31.

here 1. Godlineſſe charged in the nature of a duty upon men: *doe all to the glory of God.* Now to doe a thing to the glory of God, requires theſe four things: 1. That the thing or deed which is done, be ſuch for the nature, kinde, or ſubſtance of the act, that it be apt to yeeld matter or opportunity unto men to glorifie God; as all ſuch acts are, which are done according to the Law and commands of God, either generall, or ſpeciall, and no other. 2. That actions thus qualified as touching the nature and kinde of them, be further qualified with duneſſe of circumſtance in time and place. It is true, there are ſome kinde of actions which cannot lightly ſuffer, or degenerate, thorow any defect in theſe, or either of them; as the inward acts of the love of God, remembrance of God, *&c.* but there are few outward actions, but may. There is no externall act whereby love unto God may be expreſſed, but that the proportion which it hath in the kinde of it for the glorifying of God, may be diſſolved and deſtroyed by a miſtiming, and miſplacing of it. A third thing neceſſary to be done by him that would doe any thing to the glory of God, is; that firſt he conſults with the glory of God, and ſteadily informs himſelf what that would have, or what it requires for the exaltation of it; as a Taylour firſt conſults with the body, for which he is to make a garment, by meaſuring the proportion of it in ſeverall places, that ſo he may know how to cut and fit the garment to it, and make it ſit comely. In like manner, he that deſires to advance the glory of God by any action, or courſe, muſt be carefull to inform himſelf, what ſteerage and deportment in all particulars will render them moſt advantagious for, and comporting with, ſuch a deſigne. The fourth and laſt thing (which is the chief of the four) required to the *doing of a thing to the glory of God*, is, that the heart and ſoul of a man, in, or before the doing of it, makes a ſecret deed of conſecration or dedication of it to this end; raiſeth and produceth it for this end, and with this intention, that God may be glorified by it. It is true, there may be ſuch a deed of conſecration as we ſpeak of, made thorow ignorance, of ſuch an action, (one or more) which hath no more aptneſſe in it to afford glory unto God, then a ſtone or a ſcorpion have to nouriſh a childe withall, in caſe the parent ſhould give them unto him: ſuch a deed our Saviour himſelf

ſpeaks

ſpeaks of, *Joh.*16. where he tells to his Diſciples, that *the time would come, that Whoſoever killed them, would think he did God ſervice:* Such actions as this, devoted and conſecrated unto God, are no fruits or expreſſions of that heavenly impreſſion in the ſoul, which we call **godlineſſe**, which alwaies requires a true and ſound knowledge of God, but the fruits of ſuch a devotion, whereof ignorance is the mother, and the Prince of darknes the father; offered indeed and conſecrated to the devil for his glory, under a notion or conceit that he is a true God; as the Apoſtle cleerly expreſſeth, 1 *Cor.*10. *The things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice unto devils, and not unto God:* and yet they thought that they ſacrificed them unto God, and ſo intended, not unto devils, as appears by that inſcription upon an Altar at *Athens*, which *Paul* met with, *Act.*17.23. compared with his anſwer, or doctrine upon it: The inſcription upon the Altar was this: *To the unknown God.* Therefore their intent was to ſerve, and ſacrifice to the true God, though *unknown:* which yet more plainly appears, by what the Apoſtle ſpeaks to them upon the occaſion: *Whom therefore* (ſaith he) *ye ignorantly worſhip, him doe I declare*, or make known *unto you.* Now certainly *Paul* did not declare or make known the devil unto them (except haply by accident, and by way of conſequence) but the true God; as appears by the declaration he makes of him in the following verſes, *God that made the World and all things therein* &c. So that evident it is, that however they intended and meant to ſerve and worſhip the true God, yet in deed and in truth they ſerv'd the devil.

Joh.16.2.

1 Cor.10 20. Acts 17.23.

If you ask me, how can this be, that they ſhould be ſaid to ſerve the devil, and not God, whenas they yet intended to ſerve God, and not the Devil; nor had they any whit more knowledge of the devil (as it ſeems) then they had of God? To this

I anſwer (*verbo*) upon that ground which the Apoſtle layeth, Rom.6. *Know ye not, that to Whomſoever ye give your ſelves as ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are, whom ye obey, Whether it be of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſſe.* To which we may adde that of the Apoſtle *Peter* (of affinity with it) *For of Whomſoever a man is overcome, of the ſame is he brought into bondage*; or, is made a ſervant, δεδούλωται (in the originall) now the gentiles we ſpeak of, being overcome by the devil, *i.* being

Rom 6.16.

2 Pet.2.19.

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ing perſwaded to take up rites and ceremonies in their worſhip, of his deviſing and preſcribing unto them, with the neglect of that worſhip which God preſcribed, may very truly and properly be ſaid to worſhip or ſerve the devil, and not God; becauſe they obey the one in their worſhip, and not the other. And ſo it may be as truly and properly ſaid of many ignorant perſons in the land, and of Papiſts generally, that worſhipping God (*as they think*) but after ſuch a manner, with ſuch a worſhip, with ſuch rites and ceremonies, as the devil hath deviſed (to be ſure, God hath not) and not with that worſhip which God hath preſcribed, that they alſo worſhip and ſerve the devil and not God; becauſe they obey the devil and not God, and therefore according to *Pauls* rule, are his *ſervants*. Yea even of thoſe that know God ſavingly, and are truly godly (in the main) it may truly be ſaid, that they alſo ſerve the devil, and not God, when, and as far as, they fulfill the devils pleaſure, and are led by that learning which he hath taught the world, in and about the worſhip of God: as *viz.* when men joyn with polluted and mixt aſſemblies (mixed I mean with openly profane and ſcandalous perſons, and ſuch of whoſe intereſt in Chriſt, they have no ground or proof at all) in the ſervice of the Lords table: So again when they ſubmit to the precepts and commandements of men, in matters of worſhip; I doe not ſay, when they ſubmit to the things enjoyned and commanded by men (for this in many caſes may be neceſſary, and matter of duty to doe, *viz.* when men enjoyn the ſame things which God enjoyneth:) but, whether in this or in any other caſe, when they make the injunction or precepts of men, the reaſon and ground why they ſubmit unto them; in what caſe ſoever (I ſay) they doe this, ſo farre as they doe it, they ſerve the devil, and not God, becauſe it being the precept or command of the devil, and not of God, that men ſhould ſubmit to the wills or injunctions of men in the worſhip of God, they that doe it, obey the devil, and ſo ſerve him.

Iſa. 16. 5.
Joh. 15. 2.
Rom. 10. 2.

If it be here yet further demanded; But is it poſſible for ignorant and carnall men, truly and really to ſeek or intend the glory of God in what they doe, though they be miſtaken in the nature and quality of their action, as men truly godly ſometimes

times are. Or if they do cleerly and really intend the glory of God, though that which they do, hath no tendencie thereunto, but rather to the contrary, may not this disposition or propension in them which thus inclines them to act for God and his glory, be called godlinesse? I answer,

That for men to think they please or honour God, in such and such actions, is one thing; and truly and really to intend to please him, is another. There is no question but that the men we speak of, ignorant and carnall men, may think that they please and honour God in the course of their lives and waies, and more particularly in some spirituall actions; our Saviour acknowledgeth as much as this, in that *Joh.* 16 2. (before mentioned) and the Scripture in many places confirms it: but that they truely or singly intend the glory of God, either in the one kinde or the other, is no where affirmed. If it be objected and said,

But doth not *Paul* (speaking of the Jews) *bear them witnesse, that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.* Can men be said to have a zeal of God, or for God, without intending his honour and glory, and that earnestly, and with strength of intention?

To this I answer, by distinguishing, men may be said to intend the glory of God two waies, or in a double consideration; either, 1. Singly or simply, or 2. with relation, *viz.* to themselves, and some end or ends of their own. Now men that are carnall, and hatefull unto God in their waies, may intend to glorifie God in relation to themselves, and some good they desire and expect from him or by him: and thus the Jews were zealous for God and for his glory. They pretended for that, and that very zealously, which they verily thought was for the glory of God, as *viz.* to have the righteousnesse of the law established in the world: because they supposed, this would be an honour to them and to their nation, to have the honour and dignity of the leviticall worship, and ceremoniall law, which had been delivered by God unto them and their forefathers, and whereby they had been separated as a people of excellency, from all the world besides, for many generations: and withall thought, that if the doctrine of the Gospel, which the

Apoſtles taught concerning juſtification by faith, ſhould prevail, they and their law together ſhould be deſpiſed; and the reſt of the world be brought in to be a people of God, and ſo their priviledge and dignity, which they had a long time injoyed, *viz.* of being the onely people of God in all the world, ſhould be diſſolved and come to nought. And in this ſenſe many carnall and ignorant men now, may (and doubtleſſe do) intend the glory of God; they intend, *i.* purpoſe and mean to ſerve, pleaſe and worſhip God, and ſo to glorifie him, in ſuch and ſuch a way as they fancie to themſelves to be pleaſing to God, hopeing *to fare* the better at his hand for it. But this kind of intention to glorifie God, doth not neceſſarily, or alwaies proceed from that gracious diſpoſition in men which we call *Godlineſſe*, becauſe it may proceed out of a naturall affection of ſelf-love, and a meer deſire to accommodate and benefit themſelves. If a man hath any kinde of notion or apprehenſion of God, as of one that is able to do him good, or evil in one kinde or other (as men that are very ignorant of him in the Goſpel, may) much more, if he conceives of him, as one able to do him the greateſt good, and withall the greateſt evil; he ſhall but act according to the moſt common and ordinary principles of humane prudence, to ſeek to make him his friend; and if he apprehends no other way for this but only the glorifying of him (which is no ſuch ſpirituall or deep ſpeculation but that he very well may apprehend it,) he may very well intend and purpoſe this glorifying of him. He that ſhould intend the glory of God upon ſuch terms as theſe only, doth no more, no greater thing then a priſoner ſhould do, in intending to pleaſe or gratifie his jaylour or keeper, knowing that he hath power to make his impriſonment, either more eaſie and comfortable, or elſe more grievous and irkſome to him. And as the gratifying of a mans keeper upon ſuch terms as theſe, would argue no truth of affection or love to his perſon, or any vertuous diſpoſition in him, but onely love to a mans ſelf, and his own eaſe. In like manner, to glorifie God meerly out of relation to a mans ſelf, and ſome end of his own, doth not argue any propenſion of affection or good will towards God, but to a mans ſelf onely.

But

But now ſingly and ſimply to intend the glory of God is another thing. It doth not indeed neceſſarily exclude the ſeeking of a mans ſelf or his own good, in a regular and due manner; a man may ſingly and ſimply, and with ſincerity of heart, intend and ſeek the glory of God, and his own good and peace alſo; but it alwaies includes a truth of affection unto God, and that grounded and built upon ſound apprehenſion and ſerious conſideration of the infinite worth, grace and goodneſſe of God. So that though a mans own good might be ſeparated from his glorifying of God, and either be attainable by ſome other means, or elſe be unattainable altogether, yet the heart of ſuch a man would lean and hang towards God, and be ſtill ſeeking his glory. As ſuppoſe the center were not the proper place for ſtones, or heavy bodies to reſt, and to be preſerved in upon the beſt terms; yet the apprehenſion, or quality of weight or heavineſſe which is in theſe bodies, would carry them thereunto after the ſame manner that now they move thither: In like manner, though the creature ſhould not apprehend or conceive his own comfort, peace, or glory, to be wrapped or bound up in his glorifying of God, yet nevertheleſſe, if he were godly, this diſpoſition or impreſſion upon his heart and ſoul, would beget and breed intentions and deſires of glorifying God in him, yea and act, and carry him out accordingly. Whereas he that intends or ſeeks the glory of God meerly out of a deſire to gain or get ſomething by him, if he were not partaker of ſome ſuch hope and expectation as this, would have no inclination or diſpoſition at all within him to minde his glory. This for anſwer to the queſtion or demand, how its poſſible for ignorant and carnall men, truly and really to ſeek and intend the glory of God, and how this may be done without **godlineſſe**. And thus much to let you underſtand, what the Apoſtle means, by injoyning men to do things to the glory of God. But

2. He doth not ſimply injoyn men to do things *to the glory of God*, but univerſally, to do all things to his glory: *Whether ye eat or drink* (ſaith he) *or Whatſoever ye doe, doe all to the glory of God.* The Scriptures you ſee are ſo zealouſly intent and bent upon the exaltation of **godlineſſe** in the world, that they allow

nothing to be done in the world, no action whatsoever to passe the hearts or hands of men, though of the smallest and lightest consequence otherwise, but what **godlinesse** shall order and direct to be done. Our *eating and drinking*, yea and lesse matters then these, must be formed and fashioned (as it were) by the hand of **godlinesse**. Again,

3. The Scriptures doe not content themselves to advance **godlinesse** in the world onely by commanding the practice or exercise of it, and that universally in all things; but further seek the promotion of it, by making promises unto it, and to the practice of it, and those many, yea and these great and precious. The Apostle informs us, *that godlinesse is profitable unto all things, having promise, or the promise of the life which now is,* 1 Tim. 4. 8. *and of that which is to come.* And what can a man or woman wish or desire more, then to be well provided for, comfortably apaid in this life, and to be assured of the injoyment of that which is to come? And we see that God in the Scriptures hath annexed the promises of both these unto **godlinesse**. It were easie to insist upon particular promises in either kinde, out of other Scriptures. But the Apostles authority is sufficient to build upon in this case. With how high an hand then doe the Scriptures seek to lift up the head of *godlinesse* in the world, when as they lay down both heaven and earth at the feet of it? The greater and richer the price is, that is held forth to those that shall be willing to strive or trie masteries, and shall obtain; it is so much the more like that greater numbers will ingage in the race. And in reason, the promise or offer made both of heaven and earth together unto *godlinesse*, should make the tents of ungodlinesse desolate in one day, and bring in the world from all the four windes of the heavens, to inquire after the laws, and to learn the statutes and judgements thereof.

4. The Scriptures are not yet satisfied with all this, to make the crown of *godlinesse* to flourish upon the head of it: they further threaten terrible things, as that fire, and hail, storm and tempest shall be their cup to drink, who shall cast the care and study of *godlinesse* behind their back. All these arrows of the fiery indignation of the Almighty levell'd at the face of ungodlinesse, are pillars and supporters of the honour of

Psal. 1. 4, 5, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 18. 2 Pet. 2. 6. 3 7.

*godlinesse,*

*godlineſſe*, and render it ſo much the more lovely and deſirable in the world.

5. The Scriptures in order to the advancement of godlineſſe in the world, do not only oppoſe and ſeek to ſuppreſſe and keep down her adverſarie, ungodlineſſe, by threatning to ſlay her and her children with death, but preſents and holds forth examples of the dreadfull execution of ſuch threatnings upon ſome. *And ſpared not the old world* (ſaith *Peter*) *but ſaved Noah the eight perſon, a preacher of righteouſneſſe, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And turning the cities of Sodome and Gomorrha into aſhes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly.* 2 Pet. 2. 5, 6.

6. (And laſtly) The Scriptures yet further deſirous to lift up the throne of **godlineſſe** to the higheſt in the hearts and affections of men, ſpeak one glorious thing more of her, aſcribe one excellencie to her, wihch is apt to commend her greatly in the eyes of ſome; they aſcribe a potency, or power unto her. The Apoſtle *Paul* (2 *Tim.* 2. 5.) ſpeaking of a generation of men that ſhould riſe up in the laſt and perillous times, among other characters, by which he there deſcribes them, gives this for one; that they ſhould have a ſhew, *or form of godlineſſe, but would deny the power thereof.* So that here is aſſerted a certain might, or power, *i.* a principle of doing great things, unto **godlineſſe**. We muſt not now ſtand to explain or open this power; or ſhew either wherein it conſiſts, or unto what actions it extends. But very powerfull certainly it is, where it is in its juſt growth and ſtature; and inables thoſe in whom it is upon ſuch terms found, to do things very ſtrange and wonderfull in the eyes of men, and ſuch as all the world beſides can hardly tell how to turn their hand unto. But that which we have to take notice of for the preſent, is this; that this power which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, reſiding in it, and accompanying of it, is a thing very proper to commend it in the eyes of men, and to ſet the world on fire with love and deſires after it. The mighty ſtrength or power which is in God, is very uſually call'd his glory; and men (we know) are apt to boaſt, and glory much in their ſtrength. Rom. 1. 16.

This for the ſecond thing propounded; how, and with how.

high an hand, and upon what terms, the Scriptures riſe up to magnifie that heavenly diſpoſition in the ſoul, which they call *godlineſſe*, with the waies and fruits of it.

The third (and laſt) follows, which is this; to weigh and conſider what there is in all that hath been ſaid, to bring forth this hidden treaſure into a cleer light, to evince the truth and certainty of this concluſion, that the Goſpell is indeed from God. This you will eaſily apprehend to be exceeding much, if you pleaſe but to call to minde and conſider the two particulars that have been opened and inſiſted upon; as 1. What godlineſſe is: and 2. How mightily the Scriptures labour and travail with the promoting of it in the world. The deſigne it ſelf proclaims the great and glorious God, the authour and projectour of it, but the manner and high hand of the proſecution of it, is a further confirmation of it, and that in abundance.

For the deſigne it ſelf (in the firſt place) the exaltation of **godlineſſe** in the world. Who can with any likelihood, or colour of reaſon, be imagined to be the deſigner, the founder or projectour of ſuch a deſigne, but God alone? who could ever have thought of cutting ſuch a channell through the midſt of the world, as **godlineſſe** is, to gather all the ſtreams and currents of all the thoughts, ſpeeches, actions and waies of men into it, and here to appoint them ſuch a courſe, as to cauſe them all to fall into that great ocean of the glory of God? *Can any good come out of Nazareth* (ſaith *Nathaneel* to *Philip*) *Joh.*1.46. So may we well ask here: can any ſuch good as this, the projecting of the glory of God, come out of the dark, ſinfull, and corrupt heart of man?

But ſecondly, you will (I preſume) conceive it the leſſe poſſible, if together with the nature of the deſigne, you will pleaſe to take into conſideration, after what manner, and with how high and glorious an hand it is driven and carried on in the Scriptures. For though it ſhould be granted, that ſome one man or more, by the help and advantage of his naturall endowments or parts, being larger and richer then other mens, and further rais'd by induſtry and contemplation, might attain to ſuch a notion and reſolution as this; that it were a thing juſt and meet that men ſhould plead the cauſe of the infinite excellency,

excellency, worth and perfection of God in the world, and ſeek to perſwade all men to preferre him and his glory in all their ends and waies, and ſhould give out himſelf accordingly withall his might and ſtrength to do it (though this be no waies probable, either that ever it hath been, or will be done by any man, as we ſhall further ſhew preſently;) yet that he ſhould manage, or attempt the carrying on, and making good this his deſigne, by ſuch a magnificent and God-like method, at ſuch a rate of power and authority, as we have ſhewed you the deſigne of **godlineſſe** to be carried on by the Scriptures, exceeds all belief much more. To inſtance in ſome of the particulars: was there ever any, or is it any waies like that there ſhould have been any mortall ſinfull man, that would take upon him to promiſe the glory of heaven, and the great things of the world to come, whereof the Scriptures ſpeak, and undertake in his own name, and by his own ſtrength to make good, and that with a majeſtick confidence, ſuch a promiſe, to what ſervice or work done whatſoever, which we know, and have heard, he doth, who pleads the cauſe of **godlineſſe** in the Scriptures? Doubtleſſe no mans heart, at leaſt no conſidering or wiſe mans heart, would ever ſerve him to doe it. Again was there ever any man, or any man like to be, or to have been, that ſhould threaten *the vengeance of eternall fire*, againſt thoſe that would not hearken unto his voice in any of his commands, yea and threaten the execution of his threatnings in this kinde, by the ſtrength of his own arme, as we heard he doth, whoever he be, that threatens ungodlineſſe, and ungodly ones in the Scriptures? nay, was there ever any man, who aſſuming unto himſelf the name and power of a God, commanded **godlineſſe** unto the world in his own name; as he doth who gives commands thereof unto men out of the Scriptures? The Apoſtle indeed ſaith of the man of ſin (as he is called) *that he oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God*: So that he as God *ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing* (or vaunting) *himſelf that he is God*; i. he aſſumes a power every way equall to the power of God, as *viz.* in diſpenſing with his laws, and preſcribing laws of worſhip, and articles of faith unto men, and it may be thought, that he in this poſture, commands **godlineſſe** 2 Theſ. 2. 4.

lineſſe in the world. But 1. this man, whoſoever he is, is diſcovered and made known in the Scripture to be an impoſtor, and deceiver of the world: and therefore certainly he was not the authour of the Scriptures; if he were, he would never have writ his own name in ſuch black characters of infamy and reproach. And 2. theſe marks or characters of him, that he ſhou'd *ſit in the Temple of God as God, and ſhew or vaunt himſelf as God*, are deſcriptive and appropriate unto him; and conſequently imply, that there are no more men in the world of the like pride and impiety, but he. 3. And laſtly it is evident that he was not the authour of the Scriptures, becauſe they prophecie of his coming into the world, ſome ages after they were finiſhed and completed.

Others there have been, who to procure the more reverence and authority to the laws which they had a deſire to commend unto, and to eſtabliſh amongſt a people, pretended and gave out, that they had familiarity and conjunction with ſome Deity from whom they received them, as *Numa Pompilius*, the founder of the *Romane* ſtate, *Mahomet* with ſome others. Again, ſome likewiſe there have been, who out of a diabolicall pride, and vanity of minde, would needs be acknowledged and adored for Gods, as *Alexander* and ſome others. But for theſe latter, by ſuch a ridiculous preſumption as this, they rather expoſed themſelves to contempt and ſcorn, and loſt the honour of being eſteemed men of wiſedom and worth, then any waies gained any opinion with men of being Gods indeed. As when *Alexander* the great ſent to the ſtate and citie of *Athens*, commanding them to apotheiſe, or make him a God, they obeyed him, but with an ironicall obedience; drawing up their act for his Deification in theſe terms; *Quoniam vult Alexander Deus eſſe, Deus eſto.* i. Since *Alexander* will needs be a God, let him be one. Nor were theſe men, I mean that would needs be Gods, any great Patrons or advocates of **goodlineſſe**. As for the former, thoſe who onely pretend, and aſſerted a divine originall unto their laws; hereby plainly acknowledged and confeſ't themſelves not to be Gods. Nor doubtleſſe hath there ſuch a thing ever been heard of ſince the foundations of the world, that a man, eſpecially a ſober man, and of a capacity to write

write the things contained in the Scriptures, ſhould in the preſence of the world proclaim himſelf to be the great God that made heaven and earth.

If any man be not yet ſatisfied with the demonſtration in hand, but ſhall ſtill queſtion and doubt, whether a meer naturall man, exerciſing himſelf in the book and law of creation and providence, night and day, may not by ſuch a ſtudy and ſearch as this, come to a cleer and perfect diſcovery of the infinite perfection of God; and conſequently that he is *a rewarder of thoſe who ſhall diligently ſeek him*, and the advancement of his glory: and whether upon ſuch a diſcovery as this, he may not readily come to this concluſion, that it is a thing moſt reaſonable, juſt, and equall, and worthy all men, to magnifie him, who is infinitely excellent and worthy, to whoſe praiſe and glory, all creature intereſts and ingagements ſhould ſubmit and ſtoop, and conſequently ingage himſelf with all his ſtrength and all his might to perſwade the world hereunto; eſpecially conſidering (that which ſuch a man may eaſily apprehend alſo) that there is no courſe he can take, like unto this, to commend himſelf, to him that is infinite in perfection, and ſo to advance his own happineſſe. If ſuch a chain as this be ſtrong, and will hold in all the links of it, why may it not be poſſible, yea and probable in ſome degree, that a meer man might compoſe the Scriptures, any thing that is there ſaid for the advancement of **godlineſſe** notwithſtanding? To this I anſwer (and ſo conclude this argument,)

1. (By way of conceſſion) That there is no queſtion to be made, but that naturall men, by an induſtrious and diligent culture and improvement of their naturall endowments and abilities, may go very farre in making ſuch diſcoveries, as are mentioned in the objection; and particularly may come to take hold of this concluſion, and that with cleerneſſe and confidence, that God is infinitely perfect, perfect above all created perfection whatſoever, from which all the reſt of the particulars mentioned in the objection, ſeem cleerly deducible, without any reluctancie, or gainſaying of reaſon, in any of them. This the Scriptures themſelves do plainly acknowledge and ſuppoſe in very many places: but moſt plainly, and beyond

Rom. 1. 19, 20 all diſpute or queſtion, *Rom.* 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them* (*i.* unto them, or amongſt them, ſpeaking of naturall men,) *for God hath ſhewed it unto them. It is manifeſt unto them; for God hath ſhewed it unto them*: *i.* this γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, that which may be known of God, God hath written it in fair and legible characters in the works of creation, and withall hath given them eyes of reaſon and underſtanding ſufficient to read. Not (I conceive) that God by any extraordinary revelation or diſpenſation had diſcovered, or manifeſted this unto them; nor that they had actually attained a manifeſt knowledge or diſcovery of it. This interpretation is confirmed by that which follows, *v.* 20. *For the inviſible things of him* (*i.* of God) *from the creation of the world, i.* ever ſince men were, and had a being, *are cleerly ſeen, i* are cleerly to be ſeen, may cleerly and plainly enough be ſeen (the Greek tongue wanting *gerunds*, as the Latine Grammarian calls them, ſtill uſeth the paſſive voice in ſtead of them, as we have often heretofore, upon the like occaſion, given notice) *are cleerly ſeen, being underſtood* νοούμενα apprehended, or conſidered *by the things that are made*, meaning, that by means of the underſtanding which is in man, ingaging it ſelf, duly to conſider what the works of creation doe neceſſarily ſuppoſe and import, the inviſible things of God, *viz. his eternall power and Godhead* (as the following words explain them) may cleerly be ſeen, known, and acknowledged by men. So then the infinite perfection of God, being one of his *inviſible* things, and ſomewhat of that, which may be known of him, or as appartaining to him: yea, and a neceſſary and eſſentiall attribute of his Godhead, evident it is, that a naturall man, by a diligent exerciſe and improvement of his abilities, may attain the certain knowledge of it. But yet,

2. I anſwer by way of exception, that though a naturall man, may very poſſibly attain to a certain knowledge, that God is infinitely perfect, yea and poſſibly goe along with this knowledge as farre as it is able to carry him, and particularly be led by it unto all thoſe concluſions, reſolutions and practiſes mentioned in the objection; yet notwithſtanding it is the firſt-

born

born of improbabilities or unlikelyhoods, that ever ſuch men will do it, I mean, go along with, and follow this principle or concluſion, that *God is infinitely perfect*, in all ſuch practicall waies and ingagements, which that is apt and proper to lead unto; and more particularly, that ever they will be brought to the ingagement (chiefly inſiſted upon in the objection) *viz.* to perſwade the world, with all their might and all their ſtrength, *whether they eat, or whether they drink, or what ever elſe they doe, to doe all to the glory of God*; I ſay it is a thouſand times ten thouſand to one, that no naturall man will ever be brought to ingage himſelf in any ſuch ingagement as this. The Scripture affirms a generall averſeneſſe and indiſpoſition in men (yea in the beſt of naturall men) to ſuch a thing: and we know that where there is no diſpoſition, no will to doe that which is our duty to doe, any power or abilitie to doe it ſerves for little, but only to *leave us without excuſe* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) and to juſtifie God in our condemnation. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the beſt and moſt conſiderable amongſt the ſons of nature, the Philoſophers and wiſe men and diſputers of this world, in the fore-mentioned chapter (*Rom.* 1 28.) ſaith thus of them. *And as they did not like to retain God in knowledge* (the word *their*, in a different letter in your Bibles, inſerted by the Tranſlatours, were much better out then in; for it much darkens the Apoſtles ſence in the place) *God gave them over to a reprobate minde to doe things that are not convenient*, &c. *Rom.* 1.28. *They did not like to retain God in knowledge.* οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν, *i.* they did not make triall, they did not put themſelves to it, they *regarded not* (as the former tranſlation had it) or, they had no minde to it: τὸν θεὸν ἐ ἔχειν ἐν ἐπιγνώσει *i.* (word for word) *to have God in acknowledgement*, *i* to bring him forth in his glory, to the ſight and view of the world, that ſo he might be verily acknowledged, for ſuch an one as he is indeed. They were ſo neer to themſelves, ſo peſter'd and incumbred, ſo bewitched and charmd with ſelf-love, and ſelf-ſeeking, with deſires of promoting their own intereſts and ends in the world, as pleaſures, profits, honours, &c. that they had nothing of their hearts left to ingage or act them for the advancement of Gods glory; this was not once in all their

thoughts. And no great marvell, that poor heathen and naturall men ſhould make ſhipwrack at this rock (I mean, a neglecting of the things of God and his glory) through an inordinate deſire of accommodating themſelves, when as the Apoſtle takes up this complaint againſt the generality of Chri-
Philip. 2. 21. ſtians themſelves, *All ſeek their own, not the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* So that though there was, and is in naturall men, a power of laying out themſelves to the uttermoſt for the advancement of **godlineſſe** in the world; yet this being a bare logicall power (as we call it) *i.* a power accompanied with no manner of inclination to act according to it, nay incombred and compaſſed about with a thouſand ſinfull diſtempers and diſpoſitions, which all oppoſe and riſe up againſt the due exerciſe and actings of it, it is no waies likely, nay it is next to an abſolute impoſſibility, yea every whit as much as a morall impoſſibility, that any man ſhould ever be found to riſe up, in the due and juſt imploiment and improvement of it; or conſequently, ſhould be the authour of the Scriptures. But

3. And laſtly, Suppoſe there ſhould ſuch a man be found amongſt the many millions of *Adams* poſterity, in whoſe eye the glory of God ſhould be ſo dear and precious, as that the deſire of the advancement of it ſhould be predominant in his ſoul, and over-rule and put to ſilence, all thoſe contrary riſings and reaſonings that warre againſt the utmoſt improvement of that power, which ſuch a man may poſſibly be conceiv'd to have, for the glorifying of God, or promoting **godlineſſe** in the world; yet could not this man be reaſonably judg'd or look'd upon as the enditer, or compoſer of the Scriptures. One reaſon (amongſt others) is this: becauſe he that in the Scriptures, preſents and makes himſelf the authour and founder of the Scriptures, and pleads the cauſe of **godlineſſe** with ſo high an hand, avoucheth himſelf for God (as we ſhewed before) now if a man ſhould pretend, or undertake to plead the cauſe of **godlineſſe** with never ſo high an hand, and perform accordingly, and in the mean time affirm himſelf to be God; he ſhould moſt notoriouſly & deſperately prevaricate with the cauſe he undertakes, and plead for the advancement of the glory of a ſinfull and corruptible man, under a ſhew and pre-

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tence of pleading for the glory of the incorruptible God; and so could not be said to advance **godlineſſe.**

If it be yet said, but may not, or might not such a man, take the name of God unto himself in the Scriptures, with uprightneſſe of heart, and much prudence for the advancement of his deſigne? Might he not conceive and think, that such a doctrine, as the Scriptures hold forth for the advancement of **godlineſſe**, would be more authoritative and taking in the world, if it should come unto it in the name of God, as compos'd and fram'd by God himself? If so, then is his assuming the name of God in the Scriptures, no prevaricating with his deſigne of lifting up **godlineſſe** in the world, but rather a wise and prudent expedient for the furtherance of it. To this I answer (and so conclude.)

1. That it is no waies likely (scarce a thing possible to imagine) that a man so farre rais'd in zeal and fervencie of spirit, for the advancement of **godlineſſe** as to ingage and act in it and towards it, according to the proportion and measure of the Scriptures, should not understand and apprehend, that for any man to intend or propose to himself the advancement of Gods glory by any lie or untruth, is to sinne with an high hand against *godlineſſe*, and to take a direct course to overthrow that, which he pretends to build up. For when that lie, which is made the base or corner stone of the building, shall be discovered and found out (as all lies are in danger of being discovered every hour) the world will so much the more abhorre the superstruction, and that which was built upon it.

Nor 2. Doth it stand with the honour of the holineſſe and purity, of the wisedome and power of God, for so many thousand years together, as the Scriptures have now serv'd him, to suffer that great and sacred affair of his glory, his deereſt intereſt in the world, to be managed and promoted, by the unsanctified hand, and polluted agency of a lie. *Will you speak wickedly* (saith *Job* to his three friends) *for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* and verſ. 9. *doe ye mock him, as one man mocketh another*: in the former translation it was; *Will you make a lie for him, as one lieth for a man? q.d.* it is a most dishonourable thing unto God, unworthy his holineſſe, his Job 13 9.

wiſedome, his power, to think that he ſtands in need, or will accept with the leaſt approbation, any mans lie, any mans deceit for the building up of his glory; being ſo abundantly provided with wiſedome and power as he is, to ſerve himſelf in this kinde, yea to procure himſelf to be ſerv'd by men with truth and holineſſe. Doubtleſſe if he that fram'd the Scriptures, had been conſcious to himſelf, of ſpeaking ſo deceitfully, of making ſuch a prodigious lie for God, as to ſay that he himſelf was God being a man; he would never have put ſuch a ſharp reproof againſt his own practiſe, into the mouth of ſo juſt and holy and vertuous a man as *Job* was, and that according to his own report and account of him. But we have (I ſuppoſe) driven this argument ſo farre, that there is little or nothing left to oppoſe it with any colour of reaſon, which hath not been anſwered; or at leaſt that ſaid, which is a ſufficient ground of anſwer to it.

A 3. Argument from the matter of the Scriptures, to evince their originall from God, is, their ſtanding up with that great authority and power, to call the world, even all the inhabitants thereof to that which they call, a *deniall of themſelves* to conjure them with that high hand of importunitie and motive, into a *ſelf-denying* frame of heart and ſoul, with waies and practiſes anſwerable thereunto. Such an attempt as this upon the world, eſpecially ſo proſecuted, and followed with means ſo proper and likely effect it, as the Scriptures repreſent the matter unto us, is a ſtrong and potent inducement to any man that ſhall duly and diligently conſider it, to beleeve that God and not man is the great architect, builder and contriver of them. Let me (according to the method we obſerv'd in handling the two former demonſtrations) ſhew you (in a word) what that *ſelf-deniall* is, which the Scriptures ſo much commend unto the world, and we now hold forth unto you, as a teſtimony of their proceeding from God. Secondly, how and after what manner, by what arguments and motives, the Scriptures deal and treat with the world to caſt it into this heavenly eeſtacie of *denying* it ſelf. Thirdly, and laſtly, we will conſider what weight of reaſon or proof there is in the one, and in the other, to make good the claim of the Scriptures, wherein

wherein they avouch God for their father.

For the first, that heavenly plant of *self deniall*, which the Scriptures seek to furnish the world withall, and to plant in the hearts and lives of men, may be considered, either in the root, or in the fruit of it. By the root, I mean the inward principle or frame of heart, out of which a man is not only inabled, but inclin'd also, and sweetly disposed to deny himself. By the fruit, I mean all those outward expressions, and deportments in a mans life and conversation, which flow from such a principle, and answer the nature of it. Now this self-deniall, in the principall or root of it, may be thus described: It is such a disposition or frame of heart in a man, which inclines him, *i.* makes him willing and ready, to neglect himself in all personall and self-accommodations especially in outward things, when, and as the glory of God, and generall good of men require it for their furtherance and advancement. We shall not now stand to examine this description in all the particulars of it. The nature or main property of *self deniall*, lies in this; to make a man ready and willing to submit and subject himself and all his ends, interests, and injoyments whatsoever, unto the glory of God, and good of men, according to the occasions, and exigencies of these. So that when a man hath a call and opportunity to do some speciall service unto God, or men, but yet he cannot doe either, but either with the hazard, or certain losse of some private and personall accommodation of his own, whether matter of pleasure, profit, credit, liberty, life, or the like, if in this case he shall resolve to doe the service however, whatsoever it costs him out of his own interests, or how crosse soever the doing of it proves to to his naturall inclinations or desire, such a man may be said to *deny himself* in that action or service. And if a man be inwardly principled and uniformly disposed to act upon such terms as these, he may properly be said to be a *denier of himself*.

The reason of the term, I mean why such a gracious habit or principle as we speak of, is called, the deniall of a mans self, I conceive is this: because he that doth things contrary to his own interests, and to the disaccommodating of himself, doth

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(as it were) deny that there is any such person in being as himself. As he that acts contrary to the interests of God in the world (I mean his honour and glory) is said to *deny him (in works,) in works they deny him* (saith the Apostle) *i.* they doe such things, and live after such a manner, that men are tempted (at least) and have an occasion thereby ministred unto them, to think there is no such nature or being, as God; even as they have, when men expresse themselves in words against the being of God, and say, *there is no God:* so likewise when men shall doe things which are (or seem) contrary to their being or well being in the world, they may be said (in such a sense) to *deny themselves*; *i.* to goe to work, as if they would perswade men, that there are no such persons of men in the world, as they. As on the contrary, men are said to confesse God, or confesse Christ in the world, not only (nor indeed so much) when in words they say, there is a God, or there is a Christ in being; as when they either doe or suffer such things, which were no waies reasonable for men either to doe, or suffer, but only upon this supposition, that there is a God, and there is a Christ, and that such, both the one and the other, as the Scripture represents and affirms them to be. In the same manner of phrase and expression, men may be said to confesse themselves, in opposition to a *denying of themselves*, when they act meerly according to their own interests, and for their own benefit and pleasures, especially at such times and in such cases, wherein the glory of God, and the good of men, doe in a way of reason and equity challenge a waving of all self-respects, and self-seeking at their hand. If in such cases as these, men instead of their not minding, not regarding themselves and their own concernments, shall despise the interests of God and men, acting for themselves as if there were neither God, nor any man or men besides themselves, they may according to the honour of the Scripture phrase we speak of, be called self-confessours or avouchers of themselves. This for the first particular: what that deniall of a mans self is, which the Scriptures call the world unto; which call of theirs, we affirm to be that perfect aud distinct voice of the glorious God himself, speaking out of the Scriptures, as from a throne of holinesse unto

Tit. 1. 16.

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the world: So that theſe Scriptures may hereby alſo (amongſt other ſignes and means of diſcovery) be known to be from God.

In the ſecond place, let us with like brevity conſider, how and after what manner, by what arguments and motives it calleth the world unto that deniall of it ſelf, which hath been deſcribed.

1. By expreſſe precept or command. *Let no man ſeek his own; but every man anothers Wealth.* *i.* anothers good, anothers comfort. *Let no man ſeek his own Wealth*, but every man the wealth of other. *i.* let no man minde, regard or ſeek his own intereſt or wealth, apart from, much leſſe in oppoſition to the *Wealth* and comfort of other men. He commands, that no man ſuffers his own wealth, or contentment in any kinde, to interpoſe between him, and his faithfull endeavours to promote the good of others. Not but that it is lawfull for any man or woman, to ſeek their own good; but it muſt be with a tender eye had to the good of others, and with ſubordination thereunto. If at any time there falls out a caſe of competition, our own perſonall and private benefit and good muſt give place to the good of many: as the Lord Chriſt ſaid of himſelf, and of the end of his coming into the world; that he *came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to lay down his life a ranſome for many.* So the will and command of God is, that men ſhould ſo live in this preſent world, as if every man were dead unto himſelf, and alive unto another; *i.* had no wiſedom, ſtrength, care, time, will, neeeſſary occaſion, to act for himſelf, and his perſonall concernments in the outer man, but could finde all theſe in good proportion to act for the publique good, and for other men. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Matth 20. 28. Mark 10. 45. 1 Joh. 3. 16.

2. As the Scriptures command that *ſelf-deniall* we ſpeak of, ſo doe they incourage and preſſe unto it by the great example of the Lord Chriſt himſelf, they hold forth this pattern in the mount, and cry aloud unto the world, commanding every man to doe likewiſe. *We Which are ſtrong* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *ought to bear the infirmities of the Weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves.* *i.* not to ſeek the eaſe or contentment of the fleſh or outer man, with the diſcontent or neglect of any. For otherwiſe if the

promoting of the good of other men, be a thing *pleasing* to us, (as indeed it should) we may very lawfully, yea and commendably *please our selves*; and yet this *pleasing of our selves* in that
Rom. 15. 1. excellent and worthy thing we speak of, should not be the chief end neither, why we doe it. In the very next words the Apostle extends the exhortation beyond those who are *strong*, and chargeth the same duty (in effect) upon every man: *Let every man please his neighbour in that which is good* (or, for his good) *to edification. i.* let him subject his own ends, and desires to the spirituall good (especially) of other men. And to binde this exhortation yet closer to the consciences of all men, he makes use of the golden cord of the example of Christ himself, in the next words: *For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is Written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee*; or, the rebukes of them that rebuked thee, *fell on me. Even Christ pleased not himself.* As if he should say, since Christ himself, who above all the men under heaven might in reason have been dispensed with, and excused in this behalf, I mean from submitting his own pleasure, ease, comforts and peace, unto other men, yet was willing to sacrifice all the interests he had in the world, upon the service of the pleasure, peace and comfort of others, even of those that had *reproached*, or *rebuked* God, that is, of sinfull men; sin being a reproaching, or rebuking of
1 Joh 3. 16. God; a dishonour or affront put upon him. This motive unto *self-deniall*, drawn from the great example of the Lord Christ, is elsewhere made use of by the Scriptures, for the advancement thereof in the world.

3. To shew that the example of the Lord Christ in this behalf, though it's true, he was not (in a sence) ὁμοιοπαθὴς as *James* speaks, subject to the like sinfull passions or infirmities with us; yet is not altogether unimitable by us, the examples of the Saints, are held forth in the Scriptures also to perswade the world into a like deniall of it self. *For though I be free*
1 Cor. 9. 19. *from all men* (saith *Paul*) *yet have I made my self servant unto all men.* He was *free from all men*, as touching any ingagements upon him, as from them: not but that God had ingag'd him unto all men, as he acknowledgeth else where; confessing that
Rom. 1. 14. he *was a debtour both to the Grecians, and to the Barbarians, to the*

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wise, *and to the unwise*; *viz.* because God had honoured him, with making him a feofee in trust for them, by putting that great treasure of the Gospel into his hands for their benefit and use. In this sence he was not *free from men*, but a debtour to them; yet in the sence he means, he was *free from all men*; but however, *he made himself a servant unto all*: *i.* he did not minde or act his own work, his own businesse in the world; he did not drive any designe of making himself great, or rich, or honourable, with the greatnesse, riches, or honours of the world; but minded the businesse of other men; when he did work for himself (I mean upon his occupation of tent-making) he wrought rather for others, then for himself: his *hands* (as somewhere he speaks) *ministred unto his necessities*, yea *to the necessities of those that were with him, that he might not be chargeable unto others*. He subjected all his own temporall and carnall *things*, to their *spirituall* things; he built up their inner man, as it were, with the ruines and spoils of his own outer man. And this example of himself, he declares and holds forth to the world, to invite others into the same spirit and practise of *self-deniall* with him. You may at your leasure peruse another passage much of the same import (*Col.*1.24.) concerning the same man. And another of *Epaphroditus* not much unlike, *Philip.*2.30. besides some others. Philip.2.30.

4. The Scriptures doe not onely command and injoyn that *deniall* of mens selves we speak of, doe not onely invite, presse, and perswade to it by the glorious example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself (which a man would think were alone enough to propagate the disposition and practise of it throughout the world,) and by the examples of the Saints; but they further set themselves to draw the world by the heart and soul into this blessed businesse, with the great promise of life and salvation, and the glorious things of the world to come. *Jesus answered and said* (saith *Mark* when *Peter* had begun to say unto him, *Loe we have forsaken all and followed thee*) *Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now at this present, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands,* Mar.10.29,30.

*With perſecutions, and in the World to come, eternall life.* A like paſſage you have, *Matth.*19.29. And elſewhere you have this promiſe from the ſame hand: *he that looſeth his life for my ſake, ſhall finde it*, and proportionably, whatſoever elſe a man ſhall loſe for Chriſts ſake, beſides his life, he ſhall finde that alſo; *i.* a full and rich conſideration for it, in the life or world to come. Now a man may be ſaid *to loſe his life* (and ſo any other thing) *for Chriſts ſake*, not onely by ſuffering death, rather then renounce his Chriſtian profeſſion; but likewiſe when he expoſeth himſelf unto death, or come's to taſt of death, for the performance of any duty or ſervice in what kinde ſoever, which Chriſt hath commanded him. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of *Epaphroditus*, ſaith, that *for the Work of Chriſt he Was nigh unto death, not regarding his life to ſupply that ſervice Which Was lacking on the Philippians part towards him.* Now in caſe *Epaphroditus* had loſt his life, through his zeal and faithfullneſſe to ſtand by *Paul* in his diſtreſſe, and to miniſter unto him, he might as truly have been ſaid to have *loſt his life for Chriſts ſake*, as if he had died, becauſe he would not deny, or renounce the name of Chriſt. And ſo whatſoever a man ſuffers loſſe of, or deprives himſelf of beſides, for keeping any of the *Words*, obeying any the commands of Chriſt, he doth in true account ſuffer loſſe of it for Chriſts ſake. This is a fourth method, or way whereby the Scriptures labour to caſt the world into that heavenly ecſtacie of ſelf-deniall; *viz.* by provoking men to drink their fill of the hope and expectation of the glory and great things of the world to come.

Matth.19.29. Matth.10 39. Philip.2.30.

5. And laſtly, They have yet another formidable engine whereby to bow and bend the world unto a *deniall of themſelves*, or elſe to batter and break them in pieces; *viz.* the threatnings of the wrath and *vengeance Which is to come, of the Worm that never dieth*, and of *the fire that never goeth out.* I ſhall onely inſiſt upon two places for this purpoſe: The one is, *Matth.*10.37,38,39. The other, *Matth.*5.29.30. In the former place our Saviour expreſſeth himſelf thus. *He that loveth father or mother more then me, is not Worthy of me. And he that loveth ſonne or daughter more then me, is not Worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his croſſe and followeth after me, is not Worthy*

Mat.10.37,38, 39.

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*of me. He that will finde his life ſhall loſe it*, &c. Firſt, What is it to *love father or mother, ſonne or daughter*, and other things proportionably, *more then Chriſt?* It is to preferre the enjoyment of them, or our contentment in them, before the enjoyment of *Chriſt*, or (which is the ſame) before our ſubjection and obedience unto the will and commands of *Chriſt*: So that when it comes to a caſe of competition, between doing the will of Chriſt, and pleaſing a *father or mother*, gratifying a ſonne or a daughter, we chuſe rather to pleaſe or gratifie theſe, then to do the will of *Chriſt*. verſ.8. We know it is the will and command of Chriſt, that *men ſhould labour, not ſo much for the meat that periſheth, as for that which indureth to eternall life*. Now in caſe we have parents that are carnall, and covetous, and worldly, and would have us to be like unto themſelves, and ſhall be offended at us, and perhaps threaten to caſt us off, or the like, in caſe we ſhall apply our ſelves in any ſerious or intenſe manner to the means of grace and of ſalvation, as in frequenting religious exerciſes, converſing much with good company, *&c.* if in his caſe, we ſhall neglect the beſt means of ſalvation we can injoy, or abſtain from holy exerciſes, and refrain good company, to keep our intereſts in the affections and good will of our parents, we may be ſaid to love, father, or mother, more then Chriſt. So we know it is the will of Chriſt, that thoſe that *are rich in this world, ſhould doe good*, and not ſimply ſo, *but that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, &c. Now if men that are rich, and have full eſtates, and are forehanded in the world, to gratifie their children, and make them great on earth, as either by matching of them, or ſtocking of them, or leaving them ſo many hundreds, or ſo many thouſands when they die, ſhall neglect that commandment of Chriſt whilſt they live, and be penurious and pinching, and poor in good works, backward to *diſtribute* and to *communicate* unto thoſe that want; theſe may truly be ſaid to love ſons or daughters more then Chriſt. There is the like reaſon in other things.

Joh. 6. 27.

1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.

But what doth our Saviour mean, by that expreſſion, *is not worthy of me?* This is a figurative expreſſion, wherein the antecedent, is put for the conſequent, or the cauſe for the effect;

a propriety of ſpeech very frequent in Scripture (as heretofore upon occaſion, we have taken notice of) His meaning in it is, that ſuch an one, *viz. Who love's father or mother, more then him*, ſhall have no benefit by him, ſhall not be ſav'd by him. He expreſſeth this, by laying down a plain ground or reaſon for it; *viz.* the *unworthineſſe* in ſuch a perſon of him: *i.* the unſuitableneſſe and incongruity that would be in the action, to the equity or wiſedome of God in caſe God ſhould give of that ſalvation, which comes by me, to ſuch a man: In regard of which incongruity, moſt certain it is, that God will never do it. As on the contrary, when there is a *Worthineſſe*, *i.* a meetneſſe or capacity, as it were, in a perſon to have any ſuch act of grace or favour as we now ſpeak of conferr'd upon him, God will in that reſpect conferre it accordingly. You have this paſſage from the mouth of our Saviour himſelf, now in glory, *Rev 3. Thou haſt a few names even in Sardis, Which have not defiled their garments: i.* they have walked anſwerable to their holy calling by the Goſpel, or profeſſion: *theſe ſhall walk With me in White: i.* ſhall be partakers with me in my glory, why? *For they* (ſaith he) *are Worthy: i.* there is a *decorum* in it, there is a rationall proportion between ſuch mens waies, and ſuch a reward; not in reſpect of any exactneſſe or rigor in point of juſtice, or of merit; but in reſpect of the goodneſſe, wiſdome, and bounty of God; ſo that he may conferre the glory of ſalvation upon ſuch, without diſparagement of himſelf in the eyes of his creature, either in goodneſſe, holineſſe, *&c.* nay, he ſhall do it to the glory and high commendation of theſe: and becauſe he may reward upon ſuch terms, he will do it. We muſt not ſtand here to argue or reſolve that queſtion: Why are not wicked men, who *defile their garments*, as *Worthy* of ſalvation, or, of walking with Chriſt in white, as they are of receiving grace, or the guift of converſion from God? And if God doth not ſtand upon worthineſſe in the one, but gives grace to the moſt unworthy of all, from day to day, why ſhould he ſtand upon it in the other? This queſtion we have heretofore (as I remember) given ſatisfaction unto; and may upon occaſion beſtow ſome further thoughts upon it hereafter: we ſh ould digreſſe too farre to fall upon it for the preſent. By

Rev. 3. 4.

what

what hath been ſaid upon the Scripture cited from *Matthew*, it fully appears, that ſuch perſons as ſhall not deny themſelves in outward injoyments and contentments in the world, ſhall have no benefit by *Chriſt*, and conſequently ſhall periſh everlaſtingly: which is yet further confirmed by thoſe two following clauſes: *And he that taketh not up his croſſe and followeth after me, is not worthy of me:* And, *he that will finde his life, ſhall loſe it.* We muſt not now inſiſt upon the particular opening of theſe; as neither of that other place, *Matth.*5. which we joyned with the former: we ſhall do little upon it, ſave onely repeat the words unto you. *And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee; for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell.* By the *right hand*, and *right eye*, our Saviour means, all manner of deſires, contentments, enjoyments whatſoever, chiefly thoſe that are moſt pleaſing and contentfull unto us above the reſt. Now theſe are ſaid *to offend us*, or, to *make us to offend* (as the word ſignifies) when we are either apt to be tempted or occaſioned by them, to baulk any of the waies or precepts of Chriſt, or to walk contrary to them. And whereas he ſaith, that *it is profitable for us that one of our members ſhould periſh, and not*, &c. He clearly implies, that the not plucking out the *right eye*, or not *cutting off the right hand*, when they *offend us*, *i.* the not denying of our ſelves in ſuch contentments, which we cannot enjoy without faultring with Chriſt in ſome or other of his waies, will certainly bring the vengeance of hell-fire upon us: So that cleer it is, that the Scriptures ſtrive and contend with the world, to bring men to that *ſelf-deniall* we ſpake of, by this argument alſo of dread and terrour; *viz.* the threatning of them with hell-fire, if they will not ſubmit. This for the ſecond thing propounded: How, and after what manner, and by what means, the Scriptures bend themſelves to fill the world with the deniall of it ſelf.

Mat. 5. 29 30.

The third, and laſt thing we have to do, is to weigh and conſider, what there is, either in the nature of the deſigne we ſpeak

of.

of (*viz* in building up the world in a *deniall of it ſelf*) or elſe in the manner of the managing of it in the Scriptures (as it hath been repreſented unto you) or in both together, to evince theſe Scriptures to be from God.

Act.6.15. Firſt, the very nature of the deſigne, bewrayeth God to be the authour of it, and conſequently, of the Scriptures, wherein and whereby it is managed and promoted. It is ſaid, *Act.6.* that they that *ſat in the councell, looking ſtedfaſtly upon Stephen, ſaw his face as it had been the face of an Angel.* There was a divine beauty or comelineſſe that appeared in it. And, my brethren, if we have eyes to ſee, and ſhall but narrowly and ſtedfaſtly look upon that noble principle or diſpoſition of *ſelf deniall* which we ſpake of, with the pretious fruits and effects of it, in which it may be beſt diſcern'd and judged of, there will appear a kind of heavenly luſtre and brightneſſe in the face of it, whereby it may be diſcern'd and known to have ſomewhat more then *fleſh and blond* in it; to be of a more worthy parentage then from men. For what is the deniall of a mans ſelf truly interpreted, but the making of a mans ſelf, and his own ends, his *footſtool*, and the glory of God, and good of other men, his *throne?* And by what way can we reaſonably imagine, that ever it ſhould enter into the heart of man (except it came thither by Gods ſpeciall ſending) to teach the world to build ſuch a *throne* as this? The great maſters and inſtructers of the world, led by the beſt genius and ſpirit which they had to attend and to inſpire them, ſought to plant the world with a quite contrary principle (upon the matter) and that under the notion of a choice and excellent vertue (as we ſignified unto you, in our firſt argument of this ſecond head.) Here we inform'd you that *Ariſtotle* himſelf amongſt ſome other of his vertues condemn'd for vices in the Scriptures, ſet's up that which he call's Μεγαλοψυχια, *i.* a kinde of magnificence and greatneſſe, or ſtatelineſſe of ſpirit, which teacheth a man to ſtand upon his termes: and if he be worthy of great things, to judge ſo of himſelf, and to let the world know it accordingly. Whereas the nature and property of that *ſelf-denying* frame of ſpirit which the Scripture commends (yea and commands, as we heard) unto the beſt and greateſt and moſt deſerving of men,

men, is to teach, and perſwade men, to forbear all reflecting upon their own goodneſſe and worth in every kinde; to take heed of ſetting their hearts upon their wiſedome, or vertuous actions when they increaſe; as well as upon *riches* when they *increaſe*. To be as men that know no excellencie or deſert in themſelves, no though God hath made their faces to ſhine, by making them eminent and ſignall benefactours unto the world; but to be as *Weaned children* (in *Davids* metaphor) amongſt thoſe to whom they have been as *fathers*, and preſervers: to give the world leave to do what they pleaſe, even the worſt, unto them, when they have done the beſt they have been able, for the world: yea and to deſire no other recompence from the world, for all the good they have done for it, when they have done the uttermoſt they have been able, then onely an opportunity to doe them more ſtill; and to expect no other recompence from it, but ingratitude in the higheſt. The voice that teacheth theſe things unto the world, is certainly the voice of God, and not of men. Alas, the learning and wiſedome of the wiſe men of the world, never reach'd any ſuch notions, or ſtrains of true excellency as theſe: theſe things dwelt with God in that *light which is unacceſſible* unto men, untill himſelf was pleaſed to bring them forth into ſuch a light which is acceſſible.

But ſecondly, if we ſhall adde the conſideration of the means wherewith the Scriptures are furniſhed, and whereby they daily advance this work of *ſelf-deniall* in the world, this character of their divinity, will appear more clearly. For certain it is, that whatſoever excellencie, or praiſe-worthy thing, of how neer affinity ſoever to which *ſelf-deniall* indeed, the wiſedome, learning, and piety of this world, have at any time recommended unto, or endeavoured to advance amongſt men, they never had that outſtretched arme of means, nor any like unto it, to carry on their attempt, which the Scriptures have, to exalt that *ſelf-deniall* in the hearts and ſoules and lives of men, which they have abundantly exalted in all theſe, againſt all the ſtrong oppoſitions, the numerous and potent contradictions hereunto, which they have met with, and do meet with daily, from the moſt inveterate corruptions in the natures and cuſtomes, in the lives

and waies of men. Never did *Plato, Plutarch, Seneca,* or any of that generation of men, who ſought to make the world wiſe without the *wiſedome revealed from heaven* in the Scriptures, ever lift up ſuch a motive to the hearts and ſouls and conſciences of men, ſo likely to transform them, to act, and work, and mould them into a ſelf-denying frame, as that moſt ſtrange and never-enough admired humiliation of the Sonne of God, in the deſcription and demonſtration whereof the Goſpel ſo much rejoiceth. Nor did any man, the eyes of whoſe ſoul were never bleſs't with the ſight or enterview of the Goſpel, ever ingage life and immortality, or the powers of the world to come, to teach men how to *deny themſelves*; eſpecially upon thoſe terms of advantage on which the Scriptures imploy them, for ſuch a purpoſe: nor did any man, eſpecially without the aid of the Scriptures, ever cauſe *hell to riſe up from beneath*, after any ſuch manner, with that emphaſis of dread and terrour, which the Scripture doth to carry men upon the wings of fear over that great gulf, which lies between *ſelf-love*, and *ſelf-deniall*, to land them here. But this conſideration we have further opened and urged, in another argument, and therefore only give a taſt of it here. Howbeit the very mention of it, is ſufficient to dignifie, and diſtinguiſh the Scriptures from all writings whatſoever, whoſe authours are men, and not God.

A fourth evidence or demonſtration, from the matter of the Scriptures, to prove their originall and deſcent from God is, that heart-ſearching properly, which is found in many of the veins and paſſages of it, that penetrating force and vigour which, ever and anon, in the preaching and opening of them, is felt in the reins and conſciences and inward parts of men. As *David* ſaith of the ſun, *his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.* So doe the Scriptures compaſſe the hearts and ſouls and conſciences of men round about, there is nothing in the inward parts of men, though never ſo ſecret or retired, and that is hid from the beams of the light of them. They are as mediatours to bring men and their hearts, men and their conſciences together; and to make them acquainted the one

Pſal 19.6.

with

with the other, who before liv'd, as it were, at a distance, and had little knowledge the one of the other. *There is not a word in my tongue* (saith *David*) *but loe, O Lord, thou knowest it all together, viz.* whilst it is yet *in my tongue*, and before it be uttered. So experience shews, that there is not a word, not a thought, not a purpose or intention in the heart or soul of a man, but the Scripture knows it altogether, even whilst it is yet secret; whilst it doth but work in the very conception and first gathering or rising of it, before either it be perfectly form'd within, or put into outward act or execution, the Scripture takes hold of it, the very fountains of the great depths in men are many times as it were broken up by it; and the foundations of the round world in the souls of men discovered. The hidden treasures of darkness are brought forth into light; and men come to see the invisible things of their own spirits by it. Psal. 139. 4.

The Scriptures themselves speak much of that property of theirs which we are now holding forth unto you, as a proof, that they are from God: but because it is their own cause that is in pleading, we shall not insist upon their testimony in this kinde, save onely so farre, as the frequent and sensible experience of men and work concurre with it, and so are a conformation to it.

Now the Scriptures may be said to search, or to discover the hearts of men, two waies, or in two respects. 1. As they declare and shew unto men, such things in them, as they took notice of, and knew to be in themselves, before such declaration was made unto them, but were not aware that any other took notice of them, but themselves; thought them secrets, into which no soul had entred but their own. 2. As they disclose and discover unto men such things in them, which they never knew before to be in them, which they never minded in themselves, untill the discoveries we speak of came upon them.

For the first, There are many things in the hearts and spirits of men, which doe ἐπιπλάζειν, *i.* flote and swim as it were in the top of the waters, which are nigh unto themselves, and with which they themselves converse familiarly from time to time; but yet they little think or consider that any other hath conjunction with them in the knowledge hereof. Thus many are

conſcious to themſelves of ſuch and ſuch fears under which they live, leaſt ſuch or ſuch wicked and foul practiſes of theirs, as in waies of adultery, cheating, coining and the like, ſhould break out and be diſcovered, and come to the publike knowledge of men. So again, many know well enough that ſuch and ſuch purpoſes and intentions lodge in them; yea and that ſuch inclinations and diſpoſitions work in their members (as the Apoſtles phraſe is) Now then, this is that which I ſay, that the Scriptures many times, eſpecially in the miniſtry and opening of them, meet with theſe ſecret and hidden things of the ſoul; challenge men and women for them, and charge them with them; deſcribing them with ſo much particularity and exactneſſe, and ſo neer to the life, that men cannot lightly but think, that either he that preſents and ſhews them unto them upon ſuch terms, hath been within them, and ſeen the things themſelves, as it were, face to face; or that he that ſets them on work, and directs them to ſpeak, hath had that advantage. The Scriptures ſpeak of ſuch things as theſe, ſuch diſcoveries as we ſpeak of, as things very agreeable to them, and which may well come to paſſe by their miniſtry. *But if all prophecie* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *and there come in one that beleeveth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, viz.* of all that propheſie at ſuch a time: he is *convinc'd* of them, and *judg'd* of them; *i.* it may come to paſſe, that he may be *convinc'd* and *judg'd* of them. There is that in the nature of *prophecying*, or of opening the Scriptures, which is apt to convince and judge men. It is a property of ſpeech very frequent in Scripture, to ſignifie the aptneſſe of a means for the doing of ſuch or ſuch a thing, or producing ſuch or ſuch an effect, by mentioning the effect, as produced by it, whether it be really and actually produced, or no, ſee 1 *Cor.*8.11. *Gen.*20.3. *And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face, he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* How, or to whom, are the *ſecrets* of ſuch a mans *heart made manifeſt*, by means of that *prophecying*, or opening the Scriptures here ſpoken of? It ſeems not ſo much to others, no, nor to him neither who prophecieth; but rather to the man himſelf, as appears by the effect or conſequent of this manifeſtation, in thoſe words:

1 Cor.14.24.

words: *and ſo falling down on his face*, ſo, *i.* by reaſon of the ſecrets of his *heart manifeſted*, he will *fall down on his face and worſhip God:* though by this effect of the diſcovery made to himſelf, they are in part made manifeſt unto others alſo. But if the *ſecrets of the mans heart* here ſpoken of, be ſuch things as were known unto him before, how can they be ſaid to be made *manifeſt* unto him, by hearing the *Church propheſie?* I anſwer, they may in a five-fold ſence or conſideration, be ſaid to be made *manifeſt* to him by the means here ſpoken of, though they were known unto him before.

1. Though in reſpect of their nature or ſimple being they were known to a man before, yet in reſpect of their firſt originall, and ſource, from whence they came, *viz.* Gods heavy curſe upon mankinde in the perſon of *Adam* for ſin: and in this reſpect, *viz.* which concern's the ſhamefull and diſhonourable pedegree of them, they may be ſaid to be made manifeſt unto him by propheſying according to the Scriptures. And the truth is, that ſin, and things that are ſinfull, can never be manifeſt (in the emphaticall ſence of the word) *i.* fully manifeſt, unleſſe it be known what, or who, was the authour or firſt founder of the generation. This diſcovery or manifeſtation of ſinne, cannot be made unto any man, by any other way, light, or means, but onely by the Scriptures. Or,

2. Though the ſecrets of the heart of the man of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, might (as was ſaid) be known unto him before, in reſpect of their ſimple being; yet in reſpect of their ſinfulneſſe, or the evil cleaving to them, they might be unknown to him (or however very darkly and obſcurely known) men may know that ſuch and ſuch deſires, and ſo that ſuch and ſuch diſpoſitions, ſuch and ſuch apprehenſions, and imaginations are in them; and yet be ignorant that theſe deſires, diſpoſitions, imaginations which they know are in them, are ſo wicked and reprovable in the ſight of God, as the Scriptures repreſents them. It is one thing for a man when he hath vowed a vow unto God, and not paid it, to know that he hath not paid it, and another thing to know cleerly how ſinfull he is before God for not paying of it. It is one thing for a man to know, that he was at maſſe, or did reverence to the hoſt; another thing to know.

that he ſinn'd in doing either. The Papiſts generally know, when they are at maſſe, that they are at it; but they do not know that they do evil in being there: So naturall and unregenerate men, may know that ſuch and ſuch deſires, as (for example) of ſuch things as are another mans, and diſpoſitions, as to uncleanneſſe, fornication, revenge, *&c.* are in them; and yet not know that they are hatefull in the ſight of God. Now then, when the Scriptures in the miniſtry of them, diſcover the evil and vileneſſe of ſuch things, they may very properly be ſaid to make them manifeſt, and that in ſpeciall manner to the perſons themſelves, in whom they are; becauſe the diſcovery or reproof of particular ſinnes by the Scriptures, doe nothing in that degree affect or ſmite the conſciences of thoſe that are free, as they doe of thoſe that know themſelves guilty of them. And the truth is, that things which are evil and ſinnefull, are never manifeſt unto men, *i.* in any meaſure known, as they are to be known, and as they ſhould be known, till the Scriptures hath had to do with the judgements and conſciences of men, and work about them; till they have repreſented them unto men by their light. Hence you have the expreſſion of the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.*5. *But all things that are reproved, are made manifeſt by the light*; or rather (according to the former treatiſe which is much better, here) *But all things when they are reproved of the light* (meaning of the Scriptures, or that light which ſhines from them) *are made manifeſt, for whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is light. q.d.* As it is the nature and property of the naturall light, to diſcover and manifeſt all things, *i.* all viſible and corporeall things, where it ſhines, without which their nature ſhapes and forms and colours could not be ſeen or known: in like manner, all things that are ſpeciall, and which relate to another world, cannot be manifeſted, *viz.* to the judgements and conſciences of men, neither in the evil of them, if they be things that be evil; nor yet in the goodneſſe of them, if they be things that are truly good, but onely by the Scriptures, or the light that ſhines from them.

Epheſ.5.13.

Well then, this is another conſideration, in which ſuch ſecrets of the hearts of men, which were in reſpect of their beings known before, may yet be ſaid to be made manifeſt unto them by

by that Scripture exercise of prophecying.

3: There is another manifestation of the things we speak of, which usually follows upon the two former, as the effect or consequent of them, especially of the latter: and this is a manifestation of them in their proper tendency, which is unto death, and the everlasting destruction of the creature, with whom they are found, if they be things that are evil; whereas on the contrary, the proper tendencie of things that are good, is unto life and glory; and these also are *made manifest* in this their blessed tendencie by the Scriptures. Men may know that they have such and such desires and dispositions, such and such ends and intentions within them, and may yet further know, that they are sinnefully evil; and yet not necessarily know that they binde men over (and that with adamantine bands that cannot be broken, but by the hand of faith in Christ Jesus) unto eternall condemnation, and the vengeance of eternall fire. But the Scriptures when they *make* them *manifest* in the two former considerations, usually make them manifest in this also. *I was once alive* (saith *Paul*) *without the law, but when the commandment came sinne reviv'd but I died.* When the *commandment came, viz.* to my conscience, in the light and power of it; discovering first unto me the great evil of my sinne: secondly, the heavy condemnation which in that regard attended it; *sinne reviv'd, i* that evil principle within me, the malignity of my nature, began to work at an higher rate of wickednesse then before, causing me to think harder thoughts of God, and of his law then I did before, and strongly tempting me to be desperate in sinning, since all hope of mercy was cut off from me. *But I died, i.* I gave my self for a childe of perdition, for a lost man. This is a third manifestation, which the Scriptures make of the sinfull secrets of the hearts of men. There is yet another consideration Rom. 7 9.

(In the fourth place) wherein they may be said to make them manifest too; which results as it were from all the former. This you may conceive thus. The secrets of the hearts of carnall and sinfull men, being so discovered unto them (as you have heard) in the three former considerations in their originall vilenesse, and guilt, must needs become so much the more

more a deformed, ghaſtly, and formidable object, in the eye of their conſciences; which appearance anſwers the reality and truth of them; for things that are ſinfull, are out of meaſure, deformed, ghaſtly, formidable; and when they come to be ſo apprehended and look'd upon, then are they *manifeſt* indeed unto them who ſo judge of them: and ſo much the more *manifeſt*, by how much the more frequently and attentively men ſhall thus look upon them. Now when the Scriptures have put their colours upon the things that are ſinfull in men, and made them to appear in their eyes like unto themſelves, *i.* monſtrous, ghaſtly, and formidable (as was ſaid) the conſcience is ſo much the more provoked and ingag'd to look both frequently and attentively upon them, and cannot lightly forbear either the one or the other. This is a fourth ſence or conſideration, wherein the *ſecrets of mens hearts* may be ſaid to be *made manifeſt* unto them, by the Scriptures preached.

5. And laſtly, there is yet another ſence, wherein the Apoſtle may be underſtood, and the *ſecrets of mens hearts* be ſaid to be *made manifeſt* unto them, *viz.* when they are cleerly repreſented and held forth unto them in the Scriptures, being opened and laid before them, as a mans naturall face may be ſaid to be made *manifeſt* unto him, when ſuch a glaſſe is preſented to him, and held before his eies, wherein all the lineaments and true proportion of this face of his appears. And though it be ſuppoſed, that a man had ſome knowledge of his face, as what manner of one it is, before the glaſſe be preſented to him; yet this face of his may truly and properly enough be ſaid, to be made *manifeſt*, *i.* cleerly ſhewn unto him in the glaſſe. In like manner, though it be ſuppoſed, that naturall men know the *ſecrets of their hearts* before they come at the Scriptures; yet this diſplaying, and deſcribing them before their faces, may very properly be ſaid to *make them manifeſt* unto them. Now there is no man or woman who converſeth much, and underſtandingly, and conſcientiouſly with the Scriptures, eſpecially that lives under, or frequents a lively and powerfull miniſtry of them, but he experimentally finds, and cannot but give teſtimony unto the truth of what hath been ſaid in all the particulars inſiſted upon, concerning the property which we have aſſerted

aſſerted unto them, *viz.* of *ſearching the hearts and the reins* of the ſons and daughters of men. As the King of *Arams* ſervant told her maſter, that the Prophet *Eliſha* made *known to the King of Iſrael even the words that he ſpake in his privy chamber:* 2 King 6.12. So doe the Scriptures ever and anon tell men and women in their ear, the words they ſpeak in the ſecret chambers of their hearts; they diſcover unto them, their moſt private and retired thoughts, their counſels, the particular motions, debates and agitations of their ſpirits, in reference to ſuch or ſuch a buſineſſe, or the committing of ſuch or ſuch a ſinne; what hath paſs'd, and hath been argued *pro & contrà* within them. They deſcribe unto them the figleaves, which they ſew together to cover their nakedneſſe; I mean the fleſhly and fooliſh arguments, reaſons and grounds, by which they ſtrengthen and incourage themſelves, in waies and practiſes of looſeneſſe, vanity, and ſinne. They declare unto drunkards, and vain-company keepers, upon what grounds they build their drunken practiſes; and ſo to the adulterer, and unclean perſon, what their hope and confidence is of coming off at laſt without danger from the waies of that abomination: and ſo to the covetous perſon, and thoſe that practiſe deceipt, they unboſome theſe alſo to themſelves; and lay before them thoſe ſnares of death wherein their feet are taken; I mean thoſe carnall reaſonings and conceits, which are the oracles they conſult with, for the comforting of them in their way.

Let me adde this one thing further under this firſt head: look what hath been ſpoken to illuſtrate and confirm the heart-ſearching property of the Scriptures, in reſpect of things that are evil in men; as much is to be conceived, and might readily be ſpoken on the other hand, I mean to illuſtrate and prove the like divine faculty or property in them, to diſcover and atteſt all things that are juſt, and holy, and good in the hearts and ſpirits of good men. They declare and ſhew their hearts alſo unto them, with all the goodneſſe, beauty, and excellent workmanſhip, that the holy Ghoſt hath wrought upon them; they preſent them ever and anon with a modell and draught, of that uprightneſſe and ſincerity, of thoſe holy affections and deſires, thoſe gracious purpoſes intentions and reſolutions,

thoſe ſpirituall and ſubſtantiall reaſonings and debates, whereby they ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh themſelves in the waies of life and peace. And this for the firſt of the two waies mentioned, wherein the Scriptures may be ſaid to ſearch and diſcover the hearts of men; *viz.* as touching ſuch things, which are already known in part unto men themſelves, when they come to diſcover them. But

2. Theſe Scriptures have a more ſearching and piercing faculty then ſo, into the hearts and ſpirits of men. They doe not onely ſearch out and deſcrie ſuch *ſecret* things in men, which ſwim upon the face of the waters, and lye in the uppermoſt parts of the ſoul, being known [in part] unto the hearts of men themſelves; but they dive to the bottome, and draw out even the deep waters of the ſoul; ſuch as the ſoul it ſelf was not aware of, knew not of their being there; they declare what is below, even in the nethermoſt parts of the earth. *Who knoweth the things of a man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *but the ſpirit of man which is in him?* Yea, the *ſpirit of man which is in him*, knows but in part the things of the man. *Hazael* knew not there was any ſuch diſpoſition or principle in him, which would carrie him to commit thoſe barbarous and bloudy ſinnes, mentioned 2 *King* 8 as the *ſetting of ſtrong Cities on fire, ſlaying young men with the ſword, daſhing infants againſt the ſtones*, tearing in pieces, or *ripping up Women with childe*; nay he was ſo far from being conſcious unto himſelf of any ſuch diſpoſition as this within him, that when the Prophet charg'd him with it, he replied with great diſdain: *What? is thy ſervant a dog, that I ſhould doe this great* [or ſtrange] *thing?* He thought he was as far from doing ſuch things as theſe, as he was from being turned into a *dog*. And 1 *Joh.* 3. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*: clearly impliing, that our hearts, *i.* conſciences and underſtandings, are very defective in knowing and comprehending thoſe things in us, that are juſt matter of condemnation to us: And that in caſe we have not the teſtimony of our conſciences, that our atonement is made by Jeſus Chriſt; we have cauſe to fear and to expect a proportion of wrath and vengeance from God, for much more ſinne and wickedneſſe, then we know by our ſelves. *Yea the*

1 Cor. 2, 11.

2 King. 8, 13.

1 Joh. 3, 20.

*things*

*things of a man, which the ſpirit that is in him,* knows of, hold no conſiderable proportion with thoſe things of the man, that are in him, whereof this ſpirit is ignorant: as the fiſhes of the ſea which are taken and drawn out of the waters, are not the thouſand part for number, of thoſe that are left behind. *Therein* (ſaith *David*, ſpeaking of the *great and wide ſea*) *are things creeping innumerable, both great and ſmall beaſts.* So likewiſe it is in that great element, that vaſt treaſure-houſe of the heart and ſpirit of man: there are thoughts, affections, diſpoſitions, imaginations, with other furniture of that kinde without number, of a thouſand ſhapes and ſorts, the leaſt portion or part whereof it is, that ever comes to the knowledge of the heart and ſpirit of men, except it be by the mediation of ſuch diſcoveries, as are made by the light of the Scriptures unto them. For God (as we heard even now from *John*) is not onely *greater then our hearts* (*viz.* in knowing what is in us) but is ſo far *greater*, as that he *knows all things* in this kinde, our hearts (*i.* our conſciences, as was ſaid) knowing little in compariſon. Now look what knowledge of the hearts and ſpirits of men, is in God, is likewiſe in the Scriptures; for God hath communicated this knowledge unto them. Look whatſoever God himſelf knows concerning the generall frame and temper of the hearts and natures of men and women, he hath transfuſed and wrought it into the body of the Scriptures. So that τι γνωστὸν τῦ ἀνθρώπυ, whatſoever is knowable of the evil or wickedneſſe of the heart of man (in generall) and ſo likewiſe of the goodneſſe thereof too, when it is regenerate, is to be found in the Scriptures, if we were able to ſearch the treaſurie hereof. This great truth ſeems to lye in the joynt of thoſe two verſes, verſ. 12. and 13. of the 4th to the *Hebr. For the Word of God is lively, ſharper*, &c. *Neither is there any creature which is not manifeſt* [κτίσις ἀφανὴς] *in his ſight: but all things are naked and open* &c. q.d. *The Word of God is* (and muſt needs be) thus *lively in operation*, &c. —— becauſe God hath the perfect and through knowledge of all things whatſoever in the hearts of men; and hath levened (as it were) and ſeaſoned the Scriptures (his word) with this knowledge. He ſeem'd to take meaſure of the heart of man, when he fram'd his word, they are ſo commenſurable the one

Heb. 4. 12. *cum* 13.

unto the other, in that reſpect. There is no man or woman that have had any intimate and conſciencious doings with the Scriptures, but know by their own experience, that theſe things are ſo: I mean that the Scriptures do not onely declare unto them ſuch things, as they themſelves know to be in them, when the declaration is made; but that they propheſie alſo of many other things, which they knew not of, and could hardly beleeve were in them indeed, which yet do appear from within, and diſcover themſelves in their ſeaſon; as the diſpoſition in *Hazael* which we ſpake of, did, when the tentation came in his way, and he made King of *Syria*.

Let us now briefly conſider, whether there be not weight and power in abundance in the conſideration now propoſed and opened unto you, to exalt the concluſion on high, in your judgements and conſciences, which we drive at; *viz* that the Scriptures are the offspring and iſſue of God. *When I conſider* (ſaith *David*, ſpeaking in his meditation unto God) *thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtarres which thou haſt ordeined, what is man,* —— &c. *David* (we ſee) calls the *Heavens* Gods *Heavens* (*When I conſider thy heavens*) and the *work* of his *fingers*; and one thing (it ſeems) which made him ſo poſitive in his concluſion, that the *heavens* were Gods, i. *the work of his fingers*, was the conſideration of that glorious furniture of them, the *moon and the ſtarres*; theſe (it ſeems) gave light in the eyes of *Davids* judgement and underſtanding, to ſee and judge that God was the workman and maker of them. But certainly *the moon* and all *the ſtarres* in the firmament of heaven (take the ſun himſelf into the conjunction) doe not give any ſuch light whereby to be led unto God, as the architect and maker of them, to diſcover him in this relation unto them, as thoſe characters and impreſſions of light in the Scriptures, which anſwer with ſo much exactnes the ſecret & hidden impreſſions of things in the hearts and ſpirits of men and women in the world, doe demonſtrate theſe to be a fabrick of wiſedome and knowledge, whoſe builder and maker muſt needs be God. Some that have been diligent obſervers of the *ſun, moon and ſtarres*, have yet doubted whether God was the maker of them, and have rather thought that they were from eternity:

Pſ. 1. 8. 3.

eternity: Yea ſome that have minded them narrowly, have doubted whether there be a God or no, yea denied it, as *Diagoras*, with ſome others of old. But (doubtleſſe) never did any man, who in any conſiderable degree, underſtood and minded thoſe ſtrains and carriages in the Scriptures, which comprehend the darkneſſe, and open the hid treaſures of the hearts and ſpirits of men, doubt or queſtion, whether the Scriptures were from God or no. *And thus* (ſaith *Paul* as we heard before, ſpeaking of the unbeliever that ſhould come into the Church, and hear the Saints propheſying) *Thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face, he will worſhip God, and report, that God is in you of a truth.* The diſcovery *of the ſecrets of the heart*, even nature it ſelf teacheth men to acknowledge and reſent, as that which is above the ſphere of the creature, and proper unto God. *Come ſee a man* (ſaith the woman of *Samaria* to her countrymen) *that hath told me all things that ever I did? Is not this the Chriſt?* implying, that to be able to tell things that are ſecret, argues ſpeciall communion with a ſupernaturall principle, which is God. So *verſ.* 18. when Chriſt had ſaid unto her; *thou haſt had five huſbands, and he whom thou now haſt, is not thy huſband*; ſhe preſently concluded, that he was *a Prophet. The woman ſaith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet:* meaning, that he had the knowledge of ſuch things as he declared, imparted unto him by God, *Act.* 1.24. God is ſaid to be *the knower of the hearts of all men:* and the Lord *Chriſt* in his Epiſtle to the Church of *Thyatira* dated from heaven, aſſumes this unto himſelf, as his prerogative royall, to be he which *ſearcheth the reins and the heart*; and declares that he will cauſe *all the Churches to know it. And I will kill her children with death* (ſpeaking of *Jezabel*, a falſe *Propheteſſe*) *and all the Churches ſhall know, that I am he which ſearcheth the reins and the heart. I am he which ſearcheth*, &c. Implying that he alone, and no other, is inveſted with this glorious priviledge of *ſearching the reins and the heart.* So then this being a principle of truth written as it were by the hand of nature in the tables of every mans heart, of every mans conſcience, that to diſcover the ſecrets of the hearts of men is the proper character of God, and the Scriptures having

1 Cor. 14. 25.

Joh 4. 29.

18.

Act. 1. 24.
Rev. 2. 23.

this character ſo plainly, richly and viſibly ſtampt upon them; evident it is, that their originall and deſcent is from God.

If it be objected and ſaid; but may not men, eſpecially learned, wiſe and acute men, partly by obſerving the motions, waies and turnings of their own hearts, partly, by obſerving the diſpoſitions, humours, intereſts and ends of others in the world, and partly by holding intelligence and an intimacy of friendſhip with men of wiſedome and underſtanding like themſelves, and ſo ever and anon comparing, as it were, notes together; be able to ſay as much as is to be found in the Scriptures, concerning the ſecrets of the hearts and ſpirits of men? To this I anſwer.

1. By conceſſion; that ſuch men as the objection ſpeaks of, may ſay much upon the advantages mentioned, concerning the inward frame, the ſecret actings, and turnings, and windings of the hearts of men: they may diſcover abundance even of the deep things of men: and goe farre in ſearching the hidden treaſury of their hearts and ſpirits. And the truth is that many of them have done much in this kinde. But

Judg. 8. 2. 2. I anſwer further (by way of exception) that as *Gideon* ſaid to the men of *Ephraim, that the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim were better then the vintage of Abiezer*, ſo ſay I in the caſe in hand: that the *gleanings* of the Scriptures, *i.* a little which the Scriptures doe in breaking up the depths and ſecrets of the hearts of men, is better, of greater weight and worth, then the *vintage* of Philoſophers, then all that ever they have done, or indeed were capable of doing in this kinde. The plough of the holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures, makes a deep furrow, and turns up more of the earth and ſoil of the heart from beneath, then the Philoſophers plough doth: yea it brings up ſuch things, which the other never touched, or came neer. The *Philoſophers*, having neither themſelves the grace of the Goſpel, and the great things of *Jeſus Chriſt* tendered unto them, nor yet any of thoſe, with whom they had acquaintance; and wanting the experience of the behaviours, carriages, and expreſſions of men cloſely purſued, urg'd and preſſed by the Goſpel, the holy commands, and terrible threatnings thereof, as alſo

alſo of the confeſſions of ſuch as were in time, after long reſiſtance and diſobedience, converted by the Goſpel unto God. *Philoſophers* (I ſay) wanting theſe helps and opportunities, to know the hearts of men, could not poſſibly reach thoſe ſtreins, nor thoſe workings in the ſpirits and conſciences of men, which ſuch occaſions and provocations as theſe produce from time to time; and which are diſcovered and made known in the Goſpel. And the truth is, there is no occaſion, provocation, or tentation whatſoever beſides, nor all the occaſions and tentations in the world put together, can raiſe ſuch workings, motions, ſtreins, thoughts, apprehenſions, intentions, in the ſpirits and conſcienees of men, or draw them forth by ſutable practiſes and expreſſions of themſelves, as the Goſpel, effectually and lively preach'd unto them. This was the effect of that propheſie concerning *Chriſt*, which *Simeon* uttered, *Luk.* 2.34. *And Simeon bleſſed them, and ſaid unto Mary his Mother, Behold this childe is ſet for the fall and riſing again of many in Iſrael: and for a ſigne which ſhall be ſpoken againſt* —— *that the thoughts of many hearts might be reveal'ed*; implying, that Chriſt being effectually preach'd in the miniſtry of the Goſpel in the world, will be a means to reveal and diſcover more of the hearts and inward parts of men, then ever would have come to light, or have been taken knowledge of otherwiſe; and that this was one of the deſignes or intentions of God, in ſending Chriſt upon ſuch terms as he did, into the world. Now certain it is, that there is no kinde of thought or imagination, no motion, ſtrein, or turning in the hearts of men, that are either ſtirr'd up within only, or externally drawn forth upon occaſion, by means of the Goſpel, but that there is ſome intimation, mention, or diſcovery of it, in the Goſpel it ſelf. *For the word of God is quick and powerfull* (as we heard before from the Apoſtle, upon a like occaſion) *and ſharper then any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a diſcerner, of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Now the knowing or *diſcovering of the intents of the heart*, *i.* of all the ends and propoſalls which the heart conceiveth and projecteth in it ſelf, is the higheſt pitch, and utmoſt period of whatſoever can be known concerning the *heart* of man. Heb. 4. 12

Again

Again the *Philoſophers*, never ſaw the enmity between the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent play; never had the experience what *an abomination the Wicked man is to*
Prov. 29. 27. *the juſt*, or on the contrary, what *an abomination he that is upright in his way, is to the Wicked.* They could neither ſee the one, nor have experience of the other, becauſe the world where they lived was planted but with the one nation only, I mean with the ſeed of the Serpent: or if there were, where ſome of them lived, a ſmall ſtrinkling of the other nation, of perſons regenerate, by the incorruptible ſeed of the word,
Pſal. 37. 32. it is not like, that they much minded them, or look'd upon them under any ſuch notion. Now there is no ſuch torture and rack to the hearts and ſpirits of meer naturall and carnall men, to make them confeſſe more of their naughtineſſe and vileneſſe, as the life and power of godlineſſe and true holineſſe acted by men like unto themſelves (their unregeneracie, with the fruits of it, onely excepted) in their faces from day to day. *The*
Matth. 5. 11. *Wicked* (ſaith *David*) *watcheth the righteous and ſeeketh to ſlay him.* The thoughts, counſells and deviſes of the hearts of carnall and evil men, to work miſchief in every kinde againſt the righteous, are very ſtrange, and ſometimes very hard to be beleeved, for the ſtrangeneſſe and unreaſonableneſſe of them. *Bleſſed are you* (ſaith our Saviour himſelf to his diſciples) *when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſpeak all manner of evill againſt you falſely for my ſake.* That men ſhould *revile, perſecute, ſpeak all manner of evil* of ſuch men as the Apoſtles of Chriſt were, who were the greateſt benefactours (of meer men) that ever the world had, did the greateſt ſervice for it that ever was done, were the moſt blameleſſe and harmleſſe that ever men were in their lives and converſations, were unwearied in their labours, and travells, neglected themſelves and their own accommodations, expoſed themſelves to dangers and deaths continually, and all to doe good unto men, and make the world bleſſed; that men (I ſay) ſhould ſo maliciouſly and deſperately intreat ſuch a heavenly generation of men as this, is a ſtrain of wickedneſſe (expreſſing it ſelf out of the hearts of men) which the heathen *Philoſophers* neither ever ſaw, nor knew; or if they did ſee, or know

know it (as I confeſſe ſome of the later of them might) yet they did ſee and know it materially onely; *i.* they ſaw or knew theſe men, or ſome like unto them, as grievouſly intreated, as we ſpeak of, but they neither knew the excellency or tranſcendent deſerts of theſe men, but thought them worthy to ſuffer as they did; nor did they (nor could they, upon the former ſuppoſition) look upon the practices of thoſe that perſecuted them, as matters of any great impiety and unworthineſſe; and conſequently not as bewraying any ſecret in their hearts much conſiderable in one kinde or other. Now the Scriptures (we know) ſpeak of the perſecution of the Apoſtles (eſpecially) yea and of the Saints, as a diſcovery of the moſt grievous blindneſſe, and deſperate wickedneſſe in the hearts of men: and this judgement and cenſure of it (we know) is agreeable both to reaſon and truth. So that the *Philoſophers* had no line to let down into whoſe waters or depths of the hearts of men, out of which this wickedneſſe (I mean of perſecuting the Apoſtles and Saints) with all the ſtreins and ſhapes of it, proceeded.

3. (And laſtly) the *Philoſophers* wanting the communion and fellowſhip of the Saints and ſervants of God, and the true knowledge of them otherwiſe, could not poſſibly anatomize, open, or diſplay the hearts and ſpirits of this generation; could not deſcribe or ſet forth the warre which they ſuſtain in their bowels continually, the combate between the fleſh and the ſpirit; nor yet the weapons by which they *fight the good fight of faith* (as *Paul* ſpeaks) *The ſpirituall man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *judgeth* [or rather examineth, ἀνακρίνει] *all things*; [or every man, as the originall will rather bear] *but he himſelf is judged*, [or rather, examined, or ſought into] *of no man.* 1 Cor. 2. 16.
*By the ſpirituall man*, the Apoſtle doth not (as I conceive) mean ſimply the regenerate man, or a man in the ſtate of grace (as we call it) but ſuch a kinde of men, who over and beſides a work of grace, have ſome good degree of the knowledge of the myſtery of the Goſpel: as by the word *carnall* (oppoſite to it,) a verſe or two after, it is evident he meaneth, not meerly carnall or naturall men, who are yet in theſe ſins, but men who being regenerate, are weak and low in the know-

1 Cor. 3. 1. ledge and understanding of spirituall things. *And I brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spirituall; but as unto carnall, even as unto babes in Christ.* He could *not speak unto them as unto spirituall*, though he looks upon them as regenerate (for he calls them, *babes in Christ*) but as unto *carnall*, *i.* as unto such Christians, who had much of the ignorance and weakness of their meer naturall conditions yet upon them, and had attained no considerable growth or stature in the knowledge of Christ. So then, the Apostle saying, that *the spirituall man judgeth*, or trieth, *every man*; *but himself is tried of no man viz.* but of such as himself: for he speaks here of the whole species or kinde of *spirituall* men, though he useth the singular number (a thing usuall in Scripture) his meaning is cleerly this; that such men as are *spirituall*, any thing well grown in grace, and in the knowledge of *Jesus Christ* and the Scriptures, are acquainted with, understand, and are able to discourse, and speak of the inward condition of all sorts of men, they know how it is with the hearts and spirits of meer naturall men, what their thoughts, counsels, and inclinations are (in the generall) so likewise they know the state and condition of young and weak Christians, that are yet but *babes in Christ*, how it is with them, in the way of their hearts and spirits; and so also they understand how it is with men that are *spirituall*, and like unto themselves. They have a double advantage thus to judge, or understand the condition of every man. 1. They have pass'd thorow, and had experience of all these conditions in themselves, 1. they have been naturall men, and therefore they know the heart of a naturall man: as God reasoneth with his people,

Exod. 23. 9. *Exod.* 23. *For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye your selves were strangers in the land of Egypt.* 2. They have been weak Christians too, before they were strong, and therefore by the same reason they know the hearts of these also. And 3. (and lastly) they have had experience, and have daily, of the heart of *spirituall* men; and therefore they know the heart of such men likewise. This is one advantage, or means they have to *judge of every man.* The other, is the knowledge which they have of the Scriptures, and of the word of God, which assisting their foresaid experience of the estates of all men,

and

and concurring with it in that reſpect, muſt needs adde much unto them in this kinde, and make them very able to *judge of every man*. But *he himſelf is judged of no man. i.* of no other ſort of men, but his own, and ſuch as himſelf (as was ſaid) his heart and the waies thereof, his thoughts, counſels, purpoſes, intentions, diſpoſitions, deſires, hopes, fears, *&c.* cannot be known or comprehended by any, but *ſpirituall* men. The reaſon is, becauſe other men, having never had the experience of ſuch things in themſelves, nor any report of them by any relatour, whoſe language they underſtand, and whoſe teſtimony they beleeve, cannot come to know whether there be any ſuch thing in men, or no; eſpecially conſidering, that they are things of ſuch an excellent, ſublime, and ſpirituall nature, that though they ſhould be reported and declared unto men, yea and that by an authour of much credit and authority with them, yet would they hardly be beleeved. So then moſt certain it is, that the Scriptures, in as much as they *judge ſpirituall* men, as well as others, *i.* relate the heavenly ſtory of their hearts and ſpirits from the firſt to the laſt, could not be compoſed or fram'd by any, but either by men who were *ſpirituall* themſelves, or elſe by God himſelf. Now to ſay that *ſpirituall* men compoſed them, is in effect to ſay or grant, that God compoſed them, it being an eſſentiall character or property of a *ſpirituall* man, not to publiſh or put forth any thing into the world, in the name of God, or as from him, which he knows to be onely from himſelf, and not from God; this being, in effect to make himſelf God; which is a deep abhorring to a *ſpirituall* ſoul. And beſides, *ſpiritualneſſe* in men being, as it were, an extract, or expreſſe of the divine nature, a fair reſemblance, of the light and holineſſe which is in him, though it ſhould be granted that the Scriptures were made and compoſed by ſuch men as theſe, yet will it follow, that the originall of them, eſpecially of all that which concerns the caſe and condition of a *ſpirituall* man, is from God. This for anſwer to the objection propounded: and for this fourth demonſtration.

A 5. Demonſtration of the ſame concluſion, *viz.* that the Scriptures are from God, drawn from the matter of them;

is, that glorious and mighty power which ſometimes utters and expreſſeth it ſelf, out of ſome of the veins and paſſages thereof, in comforting, raiſing, filling and lifting up the hearts of men. The world now for many generations together, hath had a full experiment of this great power we ſpeak of, breaking out of the Scriptures in the miniſtry of them, like fire or lightning out of the cloud, by which their hearts and ſouls have been reviv'd, quickned, and rais'd, as it were, from the dead: yea and ſometimes taken up into the heavens. I make no queſtion but that our own ears have heard, and that ſome of our fathers, yea and ſome of our children, and many of our friends have told us, many of theſe *magnalia*, theſe great and wonderfull works of the Scriptures in them, and upon them; how they have at ſuch a time been ſtrangely lightned and eaſed in their ſpirits, at another time, glorioufly ſtrengthned in the inner man; at another, fill'd with joy in beleeving: at another, when they came in ſackcloth to hear, that by the hand of the Goſpel their ſackcloth was taken off from them, and they girded with joy and gladneſſe before their departure; when they came in darkneſſe, and with the ſhadow of death ſpread round about them, that the light of life ſhone unto them, and ſcattered that darkneſſe. Yea I make no queſtion but many of you that hear me this day, have in the Scriptures, *taſted of the powers of the life to come*; and felt your ſouls, as it were, bound up in the wings of the Goſpel, as if they had been ready to have been carried up into heaven immediately; that you have felt the iron bands and fetters of your fears and doubts looſed by the hand of the Goſpel, and falling from you; that upon the ſuddain *turning* of *the captivity* of your ſouls, you have been *as thoſe that dream*. My brethren theſe are no ſtrange things that I now mention unto you; they are no things, that you had need of any, either to aſcend up into heaven to know the truth of them from thence; or of any to goe down into hell, to inquire the truth of them there; no, they are things really, ſenſibly, acted and done in the midſt of you; yea I nothing doubt, but that the hearts and conſciences of many of you, are ready to riſe up, and ſtand forth to give teſtimony to the truth of theſe things. We ſhall not need for our preſent

ſent purpoſe, to inquire any further after thoſe things in the Scriptures, or in the Goſpel, by which thoſe great and mighty works we ſpeak of are brought to paſſe; as *viz.* what, or which they are, or what aptneſſe there is in them, ſo glorioufly to affect and take the hearts and conſciences of men: it is fully ſufficient, as to the demonſtration in hand, to know and conſider, that ſuch great things as were lately mentioned, are really effected and accompliſhed amongſt the ſons and daughters of men, by the Scriptures, and Goſpel, in their miniſtration. Therefore now let us ſeriouſly weigh and ponder the tenour and importance of what hath been ſaid, that we may be the better able to judge, whether there be any ſufficient light in it, whereby to ſee and diſcern truth in this aſſertion, that the Scriptures are from God.

When *Iohn* the Baptiſt ſent ſome of his Diſciples unto *Chriſt*, to ask of him this queſtion (for their own, and their fellows ſatisfaction) *Art thou he that ſhould come? or doe We look for another?* Our Saviour returned onely this anſwer by them unto *Iohn. Goe and ſhew Iohn again thoſe things which ye doe hear, and ſee: The blinde receive their ſight, and the lame Walk, the leapers are cleanſed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed up, and the poor have the Goſpel preached unto them,* or rather (as the word εὐαγγελίζονται, may ſignifie) the poor are *Goſpellized*, *i.* are taken with the Goſpel, are perſwaded by the Goſpel, or (as the former tranſlation) *receive the Goſpel*; meaning, that ſuch great and mighty, and ſtrange works as theſe, being ſo frequently wrought either by him, or in his name, did ſufficiently demonſtrate him, to be he that was to come; the glory and repute of them, being unproportionable, and too great for any deceiver, or falſe Prophet to be inveſted, and honoured with. In like manner, the queſtion being whether the Scriptures (and ſo the Goſpel) be from God, or no; is it not ſufficient to conclude affirmatively for them, that certainly they are ſo, they are from God, if we be able to ſay, that poor ſouls are mightily comforted, the weak hearts of men are wonderfully ſtrengthned; the dead ſpirits of men are raiſed and made to live again; men and women, that ſate in darkneſſe, and in the ſhadow of death, are inlightned; many that were in chains

Matth. 11. 3.

and fetters of fears and terrours of ſoul, are delivered and ſet at liberty, and the world is fill'd with joy and gladneſſe by them? Is it reaſonable to conceive, that a tree that bears ſuch wonderfull fruit as this, was planted by any other hand, then the hand of God? Who can ſpeak words, that ſhould be able to order the powers of darkneſſe, when they are fallen in making havoke and deſolation in the ſouls of men? that ſhall be able to give laws to the fears and terrours of death, of eternall death, when they have taken hold of the conſciences of ſinners? who hath any ſuch rod in his mouth, but the glorious God alone, by the ſmiting whereof the fiery and cruell burnings, the fierce and furious ragings of the guilt of ſin in the inward parts of ſoul, will be rebuked, and give place to that joy and peace which are unſpeakable and glorious? Are theſe like to be the atchievements or works of the words of men? is fleſh and bloud like to ſpeak thoſe that are dead, alive? Or hath God ſanctified the breath or wiſedome of any mortall man, to act at this rate of excellencie and power, otherwiſe then in conjunction with his own? *Lord* (ſaith *Peter* unto *Chriſt*) *to Whom ſhall We goe? thou haſt the Words of eternall life?* Men may goe the world over and over, and wait upon the lips of all the wiſedome and knowledge, and underſtanding under heaven all their daies, and never meet with the words *of eternall life*, but from the mouth of Jeſus Chriſt (I mean originally) and yet to ſpeak properly, they come not originally from him neither, as he is mediatour, but from God himſelf. When the *two ſons of Zebedee deſired of the Lord Chriſt, that they might ſit, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in his glory*; he made this anſwer, told them, that *they knew not What they ask'd*, meaning; that ſurely they did not apprehend or conſider the diſproportion that was between ſuch perſons as they (at leaſt, as they were, when they made this requeſt) and the excellency of that glory which they deſired; implying, that if they had known and duly conſidered this diſproportion, and how unmeet they were for theſe places which they deſired, they would have refrained ſuch a requeſt, they would never have lift up the leaſt deſire in their ſoul, to have that done, which was ſo unlikely to be done, yea ſo repugnant unto the wiſedome and

Joh. 6.68.

Mar. 10. 38.

equity

equity of Gods diſpenſations to doe. In like manner if men ſhall ſay and plead, that the Scriptures and the Goſpel, notwithſtanding all thoſe great and mighty works that put forth themſelves in them, and are done by them (as thoſe lately inſtanced, with their fellows) may yet proceed but from men; it may very reaſonably, and moſt truly be ſaid of them, that they know not what they ſay, nor for what they plead: the diſproportion, which lies between the weakneſſe and inconſiderableneſſe of men, and the moſt tranſcendent excellencie and greatneſſe of the works ſpecified, were it duly conſidered, would quench the ſpirit of ſuch a reaſoning, and ſtop the mouth of that diſcourſe. *Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible with you* (ſaith *Paul* to *Agrippa*, and the Jews) *that God ſhould raiſe the dead?* He plainly grants, that if he ſhould have preached, or aſſerted, the *raiſing again of the dead*, by any other agent, then *God*, they might reaſonably have judged it a thing *incredible*, and no waies likely to be done; but ſince he entitles the outſtretched arme of an omnipotent God to the work, and gives them an account withall, why God ſhould be willing to make uſe of his arme and power in this kinde; he ſuppoſeth that upon theſe terms, there is nothing unworthy the wiſedome or judgement of a conſidering man, in the belief of it: Becauſe, though *the raiſing again of the dead*, be a work of as great a difficulty, as can lightly be conceived, and in that reſpect, and in it ſelf, very incredible; yet in relation to an infinite power, before which there is no difficulty at all [a], it hath the conſideration onely of what is obvious, and eaſie to be performed. In like manner, thoſe glorious and wonderfull effects, which have been, and that with the free and full conſent of frequent and undoubted experience, aſcribed to the Scriptures, hold but a regular and ordinary proportion, to the infinite grace and wiſedome of God, and ſo may well proceed from the Scriptures, it being ſuppoſed that theſe are from God; but will be found altogether incredible, and farre above the belief of an underſtanding man, if the Scriptures ſhall be ſuppoſed to be of any other *inſpiration*, then *divine*. Doubtleſſe there had been many ſtrange things heard of in the world, in our Saviours daies; yet was it truly ſaid, by that ſometimes-blinde man,

Act. 26. 8.

Act. 19 13, 15.

[a] Gen 18 14.

verſ. 32.

*John*

*John* 9. that *Since the World began it was never heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blinde*; in consideration
verse 30. whereof he had said a little before to the Jews; *Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes*; * cleerly implying, that he that did a work more excellent and wonderfull, then ever was known to be done by any man, must needs act by a divine power, and consequently have his mission from God. So though it be granted, that many things very considerable for the cheering and strengthning the hearts of men have been effected by writings and doctrines of humane inspiration: Yet *since the World began it was never heard* that the souls and consciences of weak and sinfull men, were so raised or fill'd with joy unspeakable and glorious, by any means of that calculation, as by the Scriptures they have been, and are yet daily, both raised and filled therewith. In respect whereof it may well be look'd upon as a thing somewhat *marvellous*, that any man should not know, *whence*, or from whom *they are*. Can men *gather grapes*, and yet be ignorant whether the plant they grew on, be a vine, or no?

A 6. Demonstration from the matter of the Scriptures, to prove their originall from God, is another power which sometimes discovers it self out of some other places and quarters thereof, answering the former (in excellencie and in glory) but producing effects of a contrary nature; a power, which smites, troubles, wounds, terrifies and shakes all the powers of the souls and consciences of men, and sometimes like a storm and tempest of the wrath of the Almighty, bears down all before it. The world now hath had the reall and sensible experiment of this power also in the Scriptures for many generations. How many *mountains* have the Scriptures in their ministry, thrown down, as well as fill'd up *valleys*? how many *sconnes of pride* have *they abased*? how many obdurate and hard hearts have they broken? how many secure persons have they awakened with affrighting and horrour, out of their golden dream? how many confident ones have they shaken, and made them company for fears and doubts; as *Nebucadnezzer* was turn'd out of his Kingdome from amongst his Princes and nobles

bles, to live amongst the beasts of the field, and owles of the desert? many a soul hath these Scriptures covered with the shadow of death, who conceited themselves to be full of light: unto many a soul have they opened their eyes, to see themselves in the midst of *Samaria*, when they thought they were in *Dotham*: many a soul have they thrown down unto hell, which thought themselves in the very confines and borders of heaven: unto many they have been as the appearance of the hand-writing in the wall, was unto *Belshazzar*: they have made *their countenance to change, and their thoughts to trouble them, and the joints of their loins to be loosed, and their knees to smite one against another.* Thus have they from day to day, made havock and spoil of the high thoughts in the hearts and judgements of men, which exalted themselves there against the knowledge of God, yea and of men themselves, and of the truth. Themselves report many great things done by themselves in this kind, which, though they be no testimonies, considered in themselves, of the divinity of the Scriptures, being related by themselves, yet falling in with the frequent and sensible experience of the world in all ages, and receiving a rationall confirmation of truth hereby, they cannot in this respect but give in somewhat towards the building in hand, *viz.* the evidencing of them to be from God. We shall mention onely some few of them.

Dan 5.6.

2 King. 12. vers. 11, 12, 13.

* Upon *Peters* preaching the resurrection, and ascention of Jesus Christ; it is said, that *they that heard it, were prick'd in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and the other Apostles; men and brethren, What shall We doe?* Here were a generation of men, who before they heard this word of God preached unto them, were so far from asking *Peter* or the rest, *what they should doe* (meaning, to be saved) that they thought they could have told *Peter* himself and the other Apostles, what they ought to have done, in such a way. For the Jews generally were of this temper. But this word of the Scripture coming in the power of it unto them, was like a sword, *it prick'd their hearts*: it smote the pillars of their confidence, and made them tremble. The Sermon which *Stephen* preach'd before the counsell, had this operation upon those that heard it, that it made them *burst with anger, and gnash upon him with their teeth.* In *Peters*

Act. 2. 37.

Sermon, the Scriptures fought againſt the ignorance, and wickedneſſe of men, and overcame: in *Stephens* Sermon, they fought alſo, provok'd and inrag'd the wickedneſſe in men; but they did not overcome. God was not pleaſed to give ſuch a victory unto his word in the mouth of *Stephen*, as in the mouth of *Peter*: yet it fell on very ſore, and did terrible execution upon the hearts and ſpirits of thoſe that heard it: it threw them out of the poſſeſſion of their patience, and tranſform'd them into a rage and paſſion. So *Act.24.* when *Paul diſputed of righteouſneſſe and temperance, and of the judgement to come*, it is ſaid that *Felix trembled.* A poor priſoner at the barre pleading for his life, by diſcourſing ſomewhat out of the Scriptures, made his Judge in the midſt of his greateſt pomp, and with his guard of ſtrength about him, *to tremble.* Take that one inſtance more; concerning the Apoſtle himſelf, whilſt he was yet a Phariſee (as it ſeems) or in an unregenerate condition. *For* (ſaith he) *I once was alive without the Law: but when the commandment came, ſinne reviv'd, but I died. When the commandment came, I died.* *i.* when God made way for his Law, to come at my judgement and conſcience, in the life and power, *i.* in the holineſſe, ſpiritualneſſe, and authority of it, by removing that carnality and ignorance which had formerly ſeparated between the law and me, and kept it from coming at my conſcience, or taking hold on me; I became as a dead man; I was out of meaſure aſtonied, at what the law now being come home unto me, diſcovered both in my perſon and condition. I found nothing but carnality in my ſelf, when the ſpirituallneſſe of the law appeared unto me: I thought I had ſtood upon a ſure bottome, had built upon a good foundation, untill the law cauſed me to ſee that I was in the midſt of death, and that there was but a ſtep between me and the bottomleſſe pit. Now (my brethren) let me ask you; doe not the Scriptures, when they are effectually preached in the world, ever and anon work after the ſame manner, in the hearts and ſouls of men? are not *the mighty thrown down from the ſeats* and thrones of their confidence by it? is not the ſecurity of many turn'd into fear and horrour by it? are not the conſciences of many made to burn by it, as if they were ſet on fire of hell?

Act.24.25.

Rom.7.9,10.

are

are not the ſouls of many made to dwell among lions by it, amongſt devouring terrours, and conſternations? How frequent are caſes and complaints of trouble of conſcience, and diſtreſſe of ſoul of men and women, brought even to their wits ends, amongſt us, and that generally occaſioned, or begotten by the Scriptures. I know you are not the onely ſtrangers of the world, to be ignorant of theſe things. If you have not born any of theſe burthens your ſelves, I doubt not but you have been partakers with, and helpers unto others in the bearing of them.

Thus then you ſee that the Scriptures have a ſpirit of power attending on them, working in them and by them, very great and terrible effects in the inner parts, and that rules the ſouls and conſciences of men, as it were with a rod of iron. Let us now conſider in a word, what there is in this conſideration alſo, to argue their deſcent from God. *Haſt thou an arme like God?* (ſaith God himſelf to *Job*, arguing with him) *or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? The voice of the Lord* (ſaith *David*) *is powerfull: the voice of the Lord is full of majeſty: The voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars: yea the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon.* The Hebrews call thunder, the voice, or mighty voices of God. *Pray unto the Lord* (ſaith *Pharaoh* unto *Moſes* and *Aaron*) (*for it is enough*) *that there be no more voices of God* (ſaith the originall) i. *no more thunder.* Thunder is call'd the voice of God, becauſe it is ſo majeſtique and full of power and terrour; and hath an influence of awe and dread upon the mindes and ſpirits of men: *humanas mouet tonitrua mentes:* the thunders which move or ſhake the mindes or hearts of men: Now certainly to thunder in the ſpirits and conſciences of men and women, as the Scriptures ever and anon are wont to doe, to make ſuch terrible commotions and concuſſions there, as are from time to time made, to fill the ſoul with aſtoniſhment, as if *hell* were *riſen up from beneath*, and all the powers of darkneſſe gotten into it, cannot but argue a power adequate to that which cauſeth it to thunder in the clouds of heaven. It is true in a ſenſe (I mean in that ſenſe, in which the Scripture affirmeth it) when time was, that God was neither *in the tempeſt that rent the mountains, and brake*

Job 40. 9.

Pſal. 29. 4, 5.

*Ovid Met.*

1 Kings 19. Vers. 11. 12. *the rocks in pieces, nor yet in the earthquake, nor yet in the fire, but in the ſtill voice.* God was neither in the *tempeſt*, nor in the *earthquake*, nor *fire*; *i.* he intended not to ſpeak, or to reveal himſelf out of any of theſe unto *Elijah* in that gracious manner, which now he was purpoſed to doe; he was in this reſpect, onely in the milde and quiet ſigne; *the ſtill voice:* but yet he was in all the reſt, the other three, by the manifeſtation of his power; they declar'd the ſtretching forth of his mighty arme to produce them, and of his preſence neer: So when ſpirituall *tempeſts*, *earthquakes* and *fires*, are produc'd and rais'd by the Scriptures in the ſpirits and conſciences of men, it is a ſigne that the mighty power of God is there, and that he interpoſeth and acteth in a ſpeciall manner in the raiſing of them. For let me ask, who ſhould doe it beſides? From whence ſhould thoſe grievous agonies and conflicts of ſoul, ſo grievous above meaſure, as ſometimes they are, even unto deſpair of ſalvation, ariſe, but from God? If it be anſwered and ſaid, that the devil may tempt men to deſpair, he may caſt in his fiery darts, and make them ſtick in the ſouls and conſciences of men; there they may remain eating, and burning in the ſoul, and cauſe extremity of pain, *&c.*

I anſwer: It's true, the devil hath a power to tempt men and women to deſpair; he hath *fiery darts*, and a naturall skill, ſo to throw them, as to faſten, and make them ſtick in the ſouls and conſciences of men; *i.* ſuddainly to inject or raiſe ſuch thoughts or apprehenſions in men, which have a tendencie in them to perſwade, or move men to deſpair. But

1. God keeps a bridle in the lips of this power of his; he cannot uſe it when he pleaſeth: for then (the Saints eſpecially) ſhould never be free from this tentation to deſpair. But now and then upon ſome ſpeciall occaſion God ſlips the bridle for a while, and then Satan is at liberty; yet ſo, that even under this liberty permitted to him, the Saints, if they will keep their watch and guard ſtrong, may make reſiſtance. *Reſiſt the devil* (ſaith *James*) *and he will flee from you.* Jam. 4. 7.

2. Though God gives the devil liberty to tempt in that kinde we ſpeak of, yea though men doe not make that reſiſtance which they both might, and ought, againſt his tentations, yet except

except God gives up the ſouls and conſciences of men into his hand to be tempted by him, I mean ſo be tempted, as to be overcome, or to ſuffer from the tentation, nothing the devil can doe by way of tempting men, will faſten upon them, or much anoy them. It is the bleſſed priviledge of the creature, to be ſtill held and kept by the gracious and mighty hand of God, out of the reach of all evil, at leaſt of all evil, in any conſiderable degree prejudiciall to the comfort and peace of it, as well that which is ſinfull, as that which is penall, except onely in ſuch caſes, and upon ſuch occaſions, when God hath ſome ſpeciall deſigne, either for his own glory, or the creatures good, or both, in letting goe this hold, and ſo delivering up his creature unto either. Ye have this expreſſion twice, *Rom. 1. God gave them up to uncleanneſſe:* and again, *God gave them up unto vile affections*, &c. implying, that theſe vile affections, though they were in men all the while, yet they had no power over them, to carry them forth, into vile actions and practiſes, till God let goe his hold of the men, and ſo delivered them up, as it were, into the hand of theſe affections, that they might doe with them even what they liſt. And *Pſal 78.* we have the like from *David. He gave up their cattell alſo to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunder-bolts:* implying, that the hail might have fallen, yea and upon the cattell too (and ſo the thunder-bolts) without doing them any harm, except God had let goe the hold which he had on them before, and ſo leaving them naked of their wonted protection, they became a ſpoil to the hail and thunder. That likewiſe in *Iſa* 42. is of the ſame kinde (to omit many others) *Who gave Jacob for a ſpoil, and Iſrael to the robbers?* implying, that all the *ſpoilers* and *robbers* in the world, could not have made a prey or ſpoil of *Iſrael*, had not the God of *Iſrael*, put them, as it were, out of his own hand into theirs. Thus is it in the matter of temptation: Satan upon permiſſion, may tempt men, as he did the Lord Chriſt himſelf: yea temptations may fall thick upon the ſoul; and yet the ſoul ſuffer no great anoiance from them, or loſſe in the things of the peace and comfort of it, unleſſe God deliver it up, and leave it in the hand of theſe tentations. So that ſtill whatſoever the devil doth, or whatſoever temptations

Rom. 1. 24. 26.

Pſal. 78 48.

Iſa 42. 24.

doe, in cauſing trouble and perplexity in the ſouls of men, God is in the trouble and perplexity, as well as either of them.

3. Let me adde this further; that as no man can be tempted by Satan or by any temptations whatſoever, to the diſturbance or wounding of his ſoul or ſpirit, except God delivers him out of his own hand of ſafety into their hand of danger and evil; ſo neither can any man be tempted by either, to any further degree of inconvenience or trouble, then according to that degree wherein God is pleaſed to take off his hand of protection from him. Gods hand of protection was taken off from *Iob*, in reſpect of his children, his cattell, his eſtate, his health; and thus farre the devil was able to advance his temptation, he did afflict *Iob* with the loſſe and deprivation of all theſe: but God keeping his hand ſtill upon *Iobs* life, the devil could not by any engine or means he could make, reach this. So is it likewiſe, in ſpirituall and inward temptations in the ſoul: look to what degree the ſoul is naked before him, he is able to ſmite and wound it, to infeſt and deſtroy the peace of it: but as farre as it is ſhadowed, or covered by the hand of God, it is devil-proof; nor can any temptation, though never ſo fiery, kindle upon it.

4. Though the devil with his temptations may truly be look'd upon, as the efficient cauſes (in their kinde) of many the troubles and ſad diſturbances rais'd in the ſouls, and ſpirits of men; yet reaſon it ſelf teacheth, that God is the ſovereign and ſupream cauſe of them, at leaſt as they are penall, or afflictive to the creature, according to that of the Prophet *Amos*; *ſhall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* and whatever God doth, he doth not as a ſubordinate, but as a principall cauſe. So that when the ſouls of men ſuffer in any kinde, Satan and his temptations are not ſo much the cauſe of them, as God, who doth not onely permit Satan to doe his doe, to act his part in them, but likewiſe withdraws his own preſence, and hides his face from the creature, which indeed is, as it were, the ſoul of the temptation, without which Satan, and all his *militia* can doe nothing conſiderable to afflict the ſoul. It no waies ſtands either with reaſon or Religion, to think, that the

Amos 3.6.

creature

creature ſhould ſuffer or be afflicted, eſpecially ſo deep and ſore, as many times it doth ſuffer, under ſome tentations, but by the ſpeciall order, providence and inſpection of the Creatour. Indeed for whatſoever is ſinnefull in any temptation, we muſt finde out another father then God, who being infinitely pure, cannot bring forth any impure, or unclean thing out of himſelf.

But 5. (and laſtly) to anſwer home to the objection, or difficulty propounded; the queſtion is not concerning trouble of conſcience, or perplexity of ſoul in generall, or whither Satan with his temptations may not grievouſly infeſt and annoy the ſoul; but whether in thoſe great effects of this kinde, thoſe deep impreſſions of fear, dread, and aſtoniſhment, which are occaſioned or produced in men by the Scriptures faithfully opened, or effectually applied unto them, it be any waies reaſonable to conceive, that Satan, and not God, hath principally to doe. What Satan may doe otherwiſe, or by temptations of another kinde, doth no waies encumber or concern the demonſtration in hand: Indeed if that efficacie and power which puts forth it ſelf in the Scriptures, truly and ſubſtantially preached, in ſmiting, wounding, and troubling the conſciences of men, can reaſonably be aſcribed unto him, this will (with more colour at leaſt) cut the ſtrength and ſinews of it, and render it infirm. But that this hath no degree of truth, or likelyhood of truth in it, may appear from hence: becauſe if Satan ſhould join with the Scriptures in affecting the conſciences of men with impreſſions of fear, and aſtoniſhment, according to the tenour of thoſe things which are conteined in them, he ſhould join with them in aſſerting their authority, and truth in other things: which would be a pulling down of his own kingdome with both his hands: and Satan in ſuch a caſe ſhould *be divided againſt* Satan (as our Scripture ſpeaks) and then *how could his kingdome ſtand?* For he that atteſts the Scriptures for true, in any one vein of the matter or ſubject of them, though he doth not by this teſtimony, as fully atteſt or confirm the truth of all other things, in them, yet ſuch a teſtimony as this countenanceth the generality of them, and to a degree perſwades and opens a way likewiſe to a belief of the reſt.

Now

Now Satan certainly is not in disposition or will, a *help* of mens *faith*; nor yet in any such act, which so plainly and directly tends hereunto, as that we speak of. And besides matter of faith or belief of the Scriptures, those great effects we speak of, the shaking of the consciences, and overawing the spirits and hearts of men, being observed and known, are very proper to procure reverence and high esteem unto them in the mindes and consciences of men. Therefore whatsoever Satan may doe to disturb the peace of the consciences of men by his own weapons or fiery darts, which possibly he may sometimes make of Scriptures, falsified, misargued, or misapplied; yet certainly he will not joyn or concurre with the Scriptures, in a direct way towards any such effect, because he knows that his losse will be farre greater, then his gain, thereby. Somewhat further relating to this objection, will be touched, in the answer to that which followeth.

If it yet be further objected and said; but may not such effects as you speak of, troubles, fears and consternations of soul, be ingendred and caus'd in men, by some mistake and misunderstanding of the Scriptures? either in the preacher or interpreter of them, or in the hearers, or both? And can such troubles as these, thus occasioned and rais'd, be any argument or proof, that the Scriptures, by which, though misunderstood, they are occasioned, are from God?

To this I answer, that concerning trouble of conscience, it may be occasioned, either by the misunderstanding of some Scriptures, one or more, simply and alone, or in conjunction with the ignorance of some other Scriptures, with the true import and sence of them. Now the truth is, that there can hardly any great trouble of conscience be occasioned in men or women, either by the misunderstanding, or right understanding of all those Scriptures, that are likely to occasion trouble either in the one way, or in the other; but onely in conjunction with the ignorance or unbelief, of some others. For he that knows and beleeves that *Jesus Christ is the son of God; and that Whosoever beleeves on him shall not perish,* but —— and shall goe along in his reason and judgement with this truth, cannot lightly be troubled (I mean with any trouble looking, or tending

Joh. 3. 16.

tending towards deſpair) by occaſion of any other Scripture, or Scriptures, however underſtood, truly, or untruly. The truth of this aſſertion we have argued heretofore; and may again, upon occaſion. But for the preſent, to the objection propounded, we ſay this: that troubles of ſoul, agonies and perplexities of conſcience, being more generally occaſioned by the Scriptures, whether rightly, or not rightly underſtood, and ſeldome, if at all, otherwaies, or without them; they cannot reaſonably be conceiv'd or look'd upon, but as great intimations, yea as ſtrong evidences, that the Scriptures are from God. For who is it that hath to doe with the conſciences of men, but God? or who doe men fear, in reference to eternity, but God alone? Are men afraid of being incountred by any created power, after they are paſs'd the line of mortality? or doe they ſee any creature beyond the grave, at whoſe ſight they have any cauſe to be troubled? So then it being God, and God onely, who makes the ſpirits and conſciences of men to quake and tremble, and it being the Scriptures and the Scriptures onely (upon the matter) by which the quaking and trembling of mens conſciences are from day to day produced: is not this a clear demonſtration that theſe two hold intelligence the one with the other, and that the one (God) puts forth that mighty power of his, in conſideration whereof the conſciences of men are ſo apt to tremble, in the other (the Scriptures.)

That the conſciences of men are ſeldome much troubled or ſhaken, but by means of the Scriptures, appears from hence, that ſuch a thing as trouble of conſcience, is ſeldome or never heard of, from among pagans or infidells; no nor often out of ſuch places, where the Scriptures are not with ſome efficacy and power preached. And for thoſe other means, by which ſome ſuch effect as we ſpeak of, trouble of conſcience, may (happily) now and then be occaſioned, without the Scriptures, they are generally ſuch, as the Scripture ſpeaks of, and gives teſtimony unto, *viz.* ſome great expreſſions, either of the juſtice and ſeverity, or of the glorious power of God, *&c.* So that ſtill, that great effect we ſpeak of, the ſhaking of the conſcience, is occaſioned, and produced either by the Scriptures themſelves, or by waies and means of a plain and perfect con-

currence with them. And if ſo, the conſideration in hand, is (as hath been proved) pregnantly demonſtrative of truth in this aſſertion, that the Scriptures are from God.

A Seventh conſideration, taken from the matter of the Scriptures, ſtrongly argumentative of their deſcent from God, is, that great and marveilous transforming power which ever and anon, puts forth it ſelf in them. The hearts and ſpirits, the thoughts and counſells of men, the diſpoſitions and inclinations, the waies and courſes of men, are marveilouſly chang'd, and turn'd, as it were, upſide down, by the nature, force and power of the ſpirit, which ſpeaks unto, and acts, in and upon, the world, by them. The Prophet *Iſaiah* foretells of a ſtrange and wonderfull change, that ſhall be found among other creatures, in the day of that great Jubilee of the world, *viz.* when *the Kingdomes thereof ſhall be given unto the Saints* (as *Daniel* ſpeaketh) *The Woolf alſo ſhall dwell With the lamb, and the leopard ſhall lie With the kid, and the calf, and the lion, and the fat beaſt together, and a little childe ſhall lead them. And the cow and the bear ſhall feed, their young ones ſhall lie down together: and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the ox; and the ſucking childe ſhall play upon the hole of the aſp: and the weaned childe ſhall put his hand on the cockatrice den.* This will be a change indeed, ſtrange and wonderfull in the higheſt, when it ſhall be effected and take place: And the change that ſhall then be amongſt men, will be anſwerable unto it, as it follows, *verſ. 9. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the Waters cover the ſea.* Now the Goſpel in the ordinary courſe of it, where it runs and is glorified, makes, as it were, a preludium or preface to that great change, by altering the property of the hearts and lives of many. The covetous man it makes liberall, the oppreſſour it makes mercifull, the earthly minded, it makes heavenly; the fearfull, it encourageth; the proud, it humbleth, the unclean it purifieth; the profane it ſanctifieth: the powers of ſinne and darkneſſe in the natures and ſouls of many, flee before it. It alters many times the whole courſe and frame of nature in men; and ſo defaceth the image of Satan in many, both men and women, that thoſe that knew them in the daies

Iſa. 11. 6, &c.

verſ 9

of

of their vanity, looking upon their waies and ſpirits after the Scriptures have had to doe with, in the way of their change, could hardly ſay, theſe are the men: it takes away the heart of ſtone, and gives men an heart of fleſh in the ſtead of it. You your ſelves that hear me this day, cannot (at leaſt a good part of you) but give teſtimony, and that in your own experience, of the truth and certainty of theſe things. How many of you are really and fully ſenſible, that your old hearts have been, as it were, taken out of your bowels, by the hand of the Scriptures, and a new put into you, by the ſame hand? that the Goſpel hath come in and ſeparated between you and your old waies, *Wherein ſometimes you walked in the vanity of your mindes, and in the luſts of your ignorance*; and hath guided your feet into waies of farre more excellencie and honour, yea and hath made them lovely, and waies of pleaſure and delight unto you? The Apoſtle having reckoned up, ſeverall ſorts and kindes of ſinners amongſt the *Corinthians*, as *fornicatours, idolaters, adulterers, wantons, abuſers of themſelves With man-kinde, theeves, covetous, drunkards, railers, extortioners*; tells them, that ſuch *ſome of them* had been: *And ſuch* (ſaith he) *were ſome of you: but yee are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God.* 1 Cor. 6. v. 9, 10, 11.
They were *juſtified*, in, *i.* by or through the *name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, beleeved on, and they were *waſhed*, *viz.* from all thoſe pollutions and abominations, and ſo *ſanctified, by the ſpirit of God.* The *ſpirit of God* by acting and working the conſideration of the great grace of juſtification by *Chriſt* upon their hearts and ſouls, overcame and ſlew all thoſe vile and ſinfull affections and diſpoſitions in them, and ſo made them meet for the ſervice of God. In like manner (I make little queſtion, but) it hath been, and is the caſe with many of you: you have been ſo and ſo, proud, covetous, unclean, *lovers of pleaſures more then lovers of God*, &c. but now you are a people *of another ſpirit*, and all theſe waies of ſin and vanity, are an abomination unto your ſouls: yea whatſoever you know by your ſelves in this kinde, there is yet leſſe queſtion, but that you know many ſuch things by others, many ſuch alterations & changes that have been made in the hearts and lives of others, both men & women,

by the power of the Goſpel overſhadowing them. You know many, who ſometimes were as *a parched heath*, as *a dry and barren wilderneſſe*, now by the pouring out of the waters of life upon them by the hand of the Goſpel, become as *Eden*, and *as the garden of God:* you know where, and in whom that prediction of *Iſaiah*, chap. 55.13. is ſpecially, or in a morall ſence, fulfill'd: *For thorns, there ſhall come up* [or, there ſhall grow] *the fire-tree: and in ſtead of nettles, there ſhall come up the mirtle-tree.* My brethren, this property or power of the Scriptures whereof we now ſpeak, thus to transforme the mindes and ſpirits and waies of men, hath not been matter of opinion, or of conjecture only, but of the moſt ſenſible and certain experiment unto the world, now for many generations. And this experience ſo perfectly agreeing with many things which the Scriptures report of themſelves in this kinde, the mention and conſideration of them, cannot but adde ſome weight to the demonſtration in hand, and turn for a teſtimony unto them, that of a truth they are from God: therefore let us mention ſome few of them. *And many that beleeved* (ſaith *Luke*) *came, and confeſſed, and ſhewed their works: Many alſo of them which uſed curious arts, brought their books, and burned them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and they found it fifty thouſand pieces of ſilver. So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed. And ſuch were ſome of you* (ſaith the Apoſtle, meaning, *fornicatours, Idolatours, adulterers, theeves, covetous, drunkards*, &c.) *but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the name of the Lord Ieſus, and by the ſpirit of our God.* See likewiſe the other Scriptures noted in the margent.

Iſa. 55.13.

Act 19.18,19.
1 Cor. 6.11.
Eph. 2.1,2, &c.
1 Theſ. 1.9.
Tit. 3.3.
Matth. 21.32.

Thus we ſee by teſtimonies and witneſſes and evidences on all hands, and in all kindes, that the Scriptures are mighty and wonderfull in their operations and workings upon the judgements and conſciences, upon the hearts and affections of men, even to the changing and altering, and making all things new in them; they boaſt of great things, that they have already done, and are doing daily, yea and are yet further able to doe, in this kinde. Let us then (in a word) conſider, whether there be not a ſpirit of much conviction in the thing, to prove them the royall iſſue of the eternall God.

As

As *Nicodemus* ſaid unto *Chriſt, maſter, We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can doe theſe miracles that thou doeſt, except God be with him:* In the ſame manner, and upon the like ground, we may conclude, that the Scriptures are teachers come into the world from God: for they could not doe ſuch miracles, as we have heard, both in this, and in the two former demonſtrations, they could not *raiſe up children unto Abraham of the ſtones of the earth,* they could not of ſuch as were *a generation of vipers,* make a generation of holy and heavenly-minded men; *except God were with them.* When *John* ſent two of his Diſciples unto *Chriſt,* to ask him whether he was the *Meſſiah* that was to come, or whether they ſhould look for another, *Chriſt* made them this anſwer: *Goe, and ſhew John again thoſe things which ye doe hear and ſee: The blinde receive their ſight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed up,* &c. meaning, that the beholding and conſidering of ſuch great works as theſe, ſo familiarly, and frequently done by him as they were, were an indubitable argument and proof that he was the long expected *Meſſiah,* and that they had no reaſon to look for any other. Now (my brethren) all theſe works, and miracles being in a ſpirituall way or ſence, wrought as familiarly, as frequently, by the Scriptures, and the Goſpel, are they not every whit as lively, as pregnant an evidence and demonſtration, that they are confederate with the Meſſiah, and partakers of the ſame originall, yea and power alſo, with him? yea the truth is, that to doe the works mentioned (in a ſpirituall way) as to give ſight to thoſe that are ſpiritually *blinde,* and to enable them (with *Moſes*) *to ſee him that is inviſible*; and ſo to make the *lame to walk, i.* to make thoſe able (with *David*) *to walk in Gods ſtatutes, and run the way of his commandments,* who before halted right-down in their obedience unto him, or rather mov'd not at all in theſe waies; and again, to waſh and *cleanſe* men from the noiſome and contagious leproſie of ſinne, and to make them clean both in fleſh and ſpirit; to open the ſpirituall ears of men, and to cauſe them to attend diligently and conſcientiouſly to the great things of their peace, who before had no *ears* (as the Scripture ſpeaks) *to hear* ſuch things; and

Joh. 3. 2.

Matth. 11. verſ. 4, 5, & 6.

laſtly to *quicken* and raiſe up thoſe that are *dead in ſins* and *treſpaſſes*, and to make them live by putting in a ſpirit of faith, and hope, and grace into them; I ſay to doe ſuch ſpirituall works as theſe, requires as great, as holy, as outſtretched an arme, as the other did.

Joh. 14 12. Our Saviour expreſſeth himſelf thus, *Joh.* 14. 12. *Verily verily I ſay unto you, he that beleeveth in me, the works that I doe he ſhall doe alſo, and greater works then theſe alſo ſhall he doe.* Now *Chryſoſtom* (who was ſimply the beſt expoſitour of Scripture amongſt all the fathers) by theſe *greater works*, which *Chriſt* affirmeth that *he ſhould doe, who beleeves in him*, underſtands ſpirituall works upon the hearts and ſouls of men, analogically, and by proportion, anſwering thoſe that Chriſt did literally and externally in the bodies of men: and thoſe he affirms to be greater, *i.* (I conceive) of more worth and conſideration then theſe. And *Anſelme* in his book *de lib ro arbitrio*, hath this ſaying. *Majus miraculum æſtimo cum Deus voluntati deſertam reddit rectitudinem, quàm cum mortuo vitam reddit amiſſam, i.* I eſteem it a greater miracle, when God reſtores unto the will of a man, that rectitude, or integrity, which it willingly deſerted and forſook, then when he reſtores that life unto a dead man, which he hath loſt. Of which opinion he gives this reaſon: *Corpus enim neceſſitate moriendo, non peccat, ut vitam nunquam recipiat: voluntas vero per ſe rectitudinem deſerendo, meretur ut illâ ſemper indigeat. i.* The body dying by neceſſity, ſinneth not, that it ſhould never receive l fe again, but the will, voluntarily, and of it ſelf forſaking uprightneſſe, deſerves to want it for ever. So then, thoſe tranſformations and changes which are made in the hearts, and mindes, and lives of men and women by the Scriptures, being ſo exceeding great and wonderfull as they have been repreſented to us, cleerly argue that there is a power and preſence with them when they act at this high rate, like the power and preſence of the Almighty, and which can be none other but the power and preſence of God.

*Object.* If it be here objected and ſaid; but have not ſuch alterations and changes as you ſpeak of, been made in the mindes and converſations of men, by the morall diſcourſes of Philoſophers and wiſe men amongſt the Heathen, who had not the oppor-

tunity

tunity to take any thing out of the Scriptures to put into their writings? Have not many upon their principles, perſwaſions, and directions, been reduced from incontinencie unto chaſtity; from intemperance, unto ſobriety; from prodigality, unto parſimony: from paſſion and revenge, to a temper, and placableneſſe of ſpirit (beſides many others.) And doth not *Horace* (a Heathen Poet) give this great teſtimony to practicall and morall literature?

*Nemo adeò ferus eſt ut non miteſcere poſſit,*
*Si modo culturæ patientem accommodat aurem.*

*i.* The fierceſt wight to meekneſſe may be won,
By patient hearkning to inſtruction.

Yea is there not a very memorable ſtory, reported both by *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Valerius Maximus* (both authours of good credit) concerning one *Polemo* an *Athenian*, who at firſt was a moſt diſſolute and debauch'd young man; and afterwards, upon hearing *Xenocrates* the Philoſophers diſcourſe of modeſty and temperance, was on the ſuddain taken off from his looſeneſſe, and betook himſelf to the ſtudy of Philoſophy, and in time became a famous profeſſor of it. The ſtory they relate of this man, is breifly this. This yong *Polemo*, having ſate up all the night long revelling and drinking with his companions, in the morning after the ſun was riſen, comes in his revelling habit and dreſſe, with a light transparent garment, with a garland of flowers upon his head, and with fragrant ointments upon him, the ſtrength of his wine being yet in his head: in this poſture he comes along by the School of *Xenocrates*, who was reading a Philoſophy lecture to many of his Auditours, grave and ſober men: and finding the door open, in he comes, and ſits him down, with an intent to diſturb the Philoſopher in his way, and to daſh him out of countenance with ſome drunken prank, or other. The reſt being much offended at theſe uncivil and rude doings, *Xenocrates* himſelf no waies changing his countenance, fell off from the ſubject he was upon, and began a diſcourſe of modeſty and temperance: which diſcourſe of his, by reaſon of the gravity and weight of it, ſo wrought upon this diſſolute gallant, that he began to repent of his way, and firſt pulls off the garland that was on his head, and throws

that

that away, presently after he drawes and gathers in his arm within his cloak; and within a little while, his countenance and carriage were compos'd, and no signe of a reveller to be seen upon him, and ever after was a sober and temperate man, and fell to the study of Philosophie, and prov'd famously excellent in it. I have stood the longer in relating this passage, because I conceive it somewhat hard to finde another like unto it, to commend and set forth the efficacie, power, or successe, of Philosophicall and morall learning.

But for answer both to this instance, and to the body and strength of the objection: it is, 1. to be granted, that for such waies and practises of extravagancie, which in the eye of reason, and of the naturall conscience (I mean, upon a little consideration and inquiry) are notoriously vile, and unworthy the nature and dignity of a man, being otherwise likely to be accompanied with many inconveniences and sorrows, to them that practise them; it is easie to conceive, that men by morall perswasions and inducements may be taken of from them; yea many are reclaimed and won from dissolute courses, onely by the advise and counsell of friends. In which cases, there is indeed a great change in their outward course and conversation, yea and some change too within, otherwise there would be none without. Yea

2. A man sometimes by consulting onely with himself, and with his own thoughts and understanding, yea sometimes upon a suddain motion or apprehension rising up within him, without much consultation, resolveth to make some remarkable change in his life and waies. See *Luk.*15.17. *Mat.*21.29. But

Luk. 15.17. Matth. 21 29.

3. Though men may by morall interests and ingagements, be brought to alter many things in the course of their lives and conversations, especially such things as they may easily discern to be destructive to their honour, comfort and peace in this present world, and to alter so much within also, as is simply requisite to maintain and carry on such an outward reformation (which was the case in the example related) Yet

1. It is very seldome seen but that men who alter and change any thing in themselves or in their waies, by the influence of morall ingagements onely, or such inducements as Philosophers

are

are able to administer unto them, it is seldome seen (I say) but that they doe it with reservation and exception; I mean, of many things (at least of some one thing) which they will not alter or reform, though they cannot but know, that even these things also are evil and therefore ought to be chang'd, and done away, as well as any other. As Christ said to him in the Gospel, who thought he had *kept all the commandments from his youth up*, that *yet he wanted one thing*: So is it still found in morall converts, who by the spirit that works in Philosophicall discourses, are reduced from waies of looseness and vanity, to more regularness in their course, they are seldome so chang'd, but that there is some one thing at least, and that notoriously evil, which is not changed or reformed; they rather exchange their sins, then forsake them. Whereas those that are kindly wrought upon by the Scriptures, and by the spirit that speaketh in them, are hereby so farre changed and renewed, that (with *David*) they become men and women *after Gods own heart*, which sympathie or conformity stands in this, that they *will* (*i.* are made inwardly and truly willing to) *fulfill all his will*, or *pleasure*, *i.* to *have such respects to all* his *commandments* (so farre as they are made known to them,) sincerely to ingage and devote themselves to an universall obedience unto them; yea and otherwise then in the case of surprizall by temptation, actually to obey them. The leven of the Scriptures is spiritfull and strong, diffusing it's alterative vigor and property to the *levening of the whole lump* of the nature and frame of man: the leven of Philosophie is weak and faint, and when it works to its utmost activity, it leaves the lump (in the most considerable part of it) unlevened.

Luk. 18. 22.

Act 13. 22.

2. The change which is made in men by morall influences, and the spirit that works with the greatest efficacie in the Doctrines of men, is onely *à gradu in gradum*, or *a specie in speciem*; not, *à genere in genus*. *i.* from a greater degree of sinne to a lesser, or from one species of sinne to another; but not from sinne unto holinesse. *They return* (saith the Prophet *Hosea*) *but not to the most high*. *Polemo* (of whom we heard in the objection) though by *mingling* the *words* of a Philosopher *with faith*, was so farre *profited* by them, as of a debauched man

to be made ſober; from a reveller, to be changed into a Philoſopher; yet did he not by any change or alteration hereby wrought in him, attain the honour of a Saint, or ſon of God, or come to *partake of the Divine nature*. The incouragements, motives, *promiſes*, which Philoſophers were able to adminiſter and tender unto men; were not *great and precious* enough to work their hearts about unto holineſſe, or to tranſport and carry them out of themſelves unto God. Indeed the *promiſes* and incouragements by which ſome of them attempted the hearts and ſpirits of their diſciples, to make them more then ordinary men, were *great* enough to have effected this; yea and more then they projected or intended: for they alſo ſpake of *life and immortality*, and avouched the abiding of many glorious things after death, for thoſe who ſhould hearken to the voice of their precepts and inſtructions. But though their *promiſes* in this kinde were *great* enough for their purpoſe, yet were they not *precious* enough: they wanted a Jeſus Chriſt at the bottome of them, to give credit and authority, to give life and power, and fulneſſe of intereſt in the ſouls and conſciences of men, unto them: thorough a deficiencie whereof they were able onely to beget a dead faith, and a dead hope in men of the things promiſed: now it muſt be, not a dead, but a living *faith, that worketh by love*: and ſo it muſt be, not a dead, but *a lively hope*, which muſt ſet men on work to *purge themſelves, even as he* (i. God himſelf) *is pure*. Philoſophicall promiſes were ſufficient to prevail with men to deny themſelves in luſts and practiſes, which were more ignoble, ſenſuall, and vile, but left them to ſeek themſelves in others of a more ſubtile, though no leſſe ſinfull, nature and import, as vain-glory, ſelf-admiration, *&c.* Whereas the *promiſes* advanced by the Scriptures, are of that ſtrength and intereſt in the ſouls and conſciences of men, that they ſuffer them not to ſeek themſelves in any thing that is terrene, much leſſe in any thing that is ſinfull; but carrying them over, and beyond all theſe, prevail with them to ſeek themſelves in God onely, and his ſervice. Thus then we ſee difference in abundance, between thoſe changes which are ſometimes wrought by Philoſophicall receipts in men, and thoſe which are frequently ſeen and known

known to be effected by the Scriptures.

The eighth argument or demonstration to evince the descent of the Scriptures (and so of the Gospel) from heaven, arising from the matter of the Scriptures, is the excellencie of that wisedome, the heights and depths of that understanding, which shine forth and discover themselves in them, and particularly in the great transaction of the Gospel, as it is presented unto the world in the Scriptures. The Apostle *Paul* hath this passage, *Eph.*3 8,9,10. *Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisedome of God.* What the Apostle here asserts unto God, in respect of the Gospel, a manifoldnesse, or an abundant variety of wisedome; is easie to be discern'd by those that will draw neer to the Scriptures and to the Gospel, and give out the strength of their minds and understandings in the study and contemplation of them. *Argum.*8. Eph.3 8,5,10. Col.2.3. Joh.14 26.

If you ask me, but by what rule shall we be able to judge of excellencie of wisedome, and choicenesse of understanding? what is that which you call excellencie of wisedome that when we see or apprehend it, we may be able to acknowledge it, and do reverence unto it. To this I answer.

1. That all men are not alike capable of the knowledge of wisedome; nor alike apprehensive of the excellencie and choicenesse of understanding. Some men are by nature of low, dull and depressed understandings, who cannot rise, no not to an ordinary pitch to conceive and reach things of a middle nature, or of any whit more then of a common purport. Others have their lot of reason, apprehension, and capacity assign'd unto them by God, in a better ground: I mean, they are naturally more ready and quick of apprehension, can relish and taste wisedome when they meet with it, sooner, and with lesse consideration and fewer debates upon things, then others. Now for the former of these persons that are slow of appre-

henſion, it is very hard to preſcribe them a rule, whereby to judge of excellencie of wiſedom, that they are capable of; but onely the rule of much labour and diligence to conſider the nature, and tendencie of things propoſed to them. As *Solomon* ſaith, If the *iron be blunt*, and a man hath not whet it to an edge, *he muſt put the moe ſtrength to it:* So where nature hath not confer'd an eſtate of reaſon and underſtanding, they muſt be content to betake themſelves to the hand of diligence and induſtry, if they mean to live and act at the ſame rate of wiſedome with other men.

Eccl. 10. 10.

2. Some by *reaſon of uſe*, habit, or cuſtome (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *have their Wits*, or *ſences exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil*; he ſpeaks of the diſcerning of things ſpiritually good, and ſpiritually evil; and conſequently of diſcerning things, truly good, and truly evil. Theſe differences of things, *good and evil*, are moſt conſiderable in ſpirituall things; and of light conſequence in all others. Now as ſome have their αἰσθητήρια, their *ſences* (he means their intellectuall *ſences*) *exerciſed in diſcerning good and evill*, *i.* that are ever and anon, weighing, and ſtudying and conſidering matters of a ſpirituall nature, to finde out truth from errour, and that which is *good*, from that which is *evil*; ſo there are others, whoſe *ſences*, in this kinde, through diſuſe, grow ruſty, and unfit for thoſe operations and functions, which are moſt naturall and proper to them. Now for thoſe that have their *ſences* ſo *exerciſed*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, they need no rule to be given them, whereby to diſcern or judge of excellencie of wiſedome; the very conſtitution, frame and temper of their ſences, or diſcerning faculty, is a ſufficient rule unto them in this kinde: as the very palate or taſte of ſome men, qualifies them to an excellent degree, without any other rule, to apprehend with all exactneſſe the different taſts both of meats and drinks. The excellent ſtrains, the ſavour and taſte of the wiſedom of God in the Goſpel, is (doubtleſſe) ſtrongly and with much ſatisfaction apprehended by ſuch men. Yet

Heb 5. 14.

3. And laſtly, to fix a generall rule, whereby to judge of excellencie of wiſedome and underſtanding (at leaſt in one of the moſt conſiderable ſubjects or objects of it) and herein alſo

to

to ſhew them wherein this excellency conſiſts; excellency of wiſedome (in the generall) conſiſts as in other things, ſo chiefly in this: *viz.* in the contrivement of ſuch means, for the bringing of any great and much deſirable end to paſſe, ſuch an end which otherwiſe, and according to all rule of common apprehenſion, is very difficult, and ſcarce poſſible to be brought to paſſe; wiſedom (I ſay) chiefly ſtands in the contrivement of ſuch means for the bringing ſuch an end as this to paſſe, which have theſe four properties in them. 1. A ſtrong, and indiſſolvable connexion with the end, *i.* when they are ſuch, which can hardly, if at all, be defeated or miſcarry. 2. An equitableneſſe or righteouſneſſe thorowout; when there is nothing ſinfull, nothing unjuſt or unworthy in them. 3. A ſweetneſſe and pleaſantneſſe of proportion to the end; *i.* when the ſtrength of that connexion, which they have with the end, lies more in the ſtratagem, I mean in the manner of the contrivance, hath moſt of the head in it, and as little of the arme, or right-down force, as may be. The 4th and laſt propertie, Is a certain remoteneſſe of the whole, or main of the projection or contrivance, from the common thoughts or apprehenſions of men: this is, when the means we ſpeak of is of ſuch a nature, compounded, as it were, of ſuch ingredients, and made up into ſuch a deviſe, which was no waies likely to have entred into the heart or thoughts of any other, but onely his, who is the contriver of it. I ſhall not ſtand to argue any of theſe particulars; nor yet to prove, that excellencie of wiſedome conſiſts in them; the reaſon why I place wiſedome, and that in the excellencie and glory of it, in theſe jointly taken, is evident enough by a diligent conſideration of them reſpectively and together. I ſhall (for the preſent) onely ſhew you how you may by the rule now delivered unto you, be able to diſcern and judge ſomewhat, of that excellent and choice wiſedome, which rules and reigns, yea triumphs in the frame and compoſure of the Goſpel; this onely premis'd by way of caution, that we doe not limit or confine wiſedom in the excellencie of it, onely to the contrivement of means of what nature or property ſoever, or for the compaſſing or obtaining of what end ſoever. There may be an excellencie of wiſedom, 1. In the election of

mens ends (at leaſt their particular and ſubordinate ends) as *viz.* in ſetting up godlineſſe, or excelling in grace, for a mans end, before riches, or greatneſſe in the world; and ſo, in making the good, or comfort of others, a mans end, rather then himſelf, or his own advancement in outward things; though the truth is, that in propriety of ſpeech, the chuſing of ſuch ends as theſe, is rather a chuſing of means, then of ends. Indeed if we ſpeak of the great and ultimate end of *men*, their *ſummum bonum*, their ſoveraign good, wiſedom hath no place in the chuſing of this, but nature onely. All men naturally, without any deliberation or conſultation upon the matter, deſire happineſſe; this is every mans end without exception: though there be a vaſt difference among men in traverſing, or proſecuting this end, anſwerable to their different apprehenſions concerning the nature and ſubſtance of the end it ſelf. Again

2. There is choiceneſſe of wiſedom too in a due and diligent proſecution of means, as well as in a choice contrivance of means. *The ſluggard* or the ſlothfull man, and the fool, or *man deſtitute of underſtanding*, are one and the ſame with *Solomon*; and otherwhile, the wiſe man and the diligent, or induſtrious, the ſame. And this wiſedom I would gladly recommend unto you (my brethren of this Church and fellowſhip.) I wiſh your wiſedom in proſecuting the means of your ſpirituall wellfare, were like unto the faith of the Romanes, *Rom.* 1.8. which was *famous throughout the world*.

3. Wiſedom likewiſe is ſeen, and may be ſeen in much of his excellencie and ſtrength, in judging of connexions and proportions between cauſes and effects, whether naturall or morall: as in being able to diſcern and foreſee, what men of ſuch and ſuch principles, of ſuch and ſuch practiſes, are like to doe in ſuch and ſuch caſes, under ſuch and ſuch circumſtances, &c. as God by means of the infiniteneſſe of his wiſedom was able certainly to foreſee, how the men of *Keilah* would have dealt by *David*, had he ſtai'd in their city, till *Saul* had come to demand him: and ſo likewiſe how the men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* would have acquitted themſelves in matter of repentance, in caſe the like *Works* had *been done amongſt them*, which were done

1 Sam. 23 11, 12.

Mat. 11.21. 23.

done in *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida.*

But however Wiſedome may have place to ſhew her ſelf, and that with much excellencie, in theſe and haply in ſome other particulars beſides theſe, as well as in the contrivement of means for the bringing any end whatſoever to paſſe; yet I have made choice of this head rather then any of the reſt, as more commodious and proper to work upon, and proſecute, for that end and purpoſe which we have in hand; *viz.* to make you capable (in ſome meaſure) of diſcerning that tranſcendent excellencie of wiſedome, which ſhines in the face of the Scriptures (and of the Goſpel more particularly) and makes it glorious, even like unto the appearance of that *inviſible* one, whom *Moſes* ſaw, though inviſible.

Firſt then you muſt underſtand and conſider diſtinctly, what that end, or endes are (be they one, or more, at leaſt the principall and moſt conſiderable of them) which God propounds to himſelf in the Goſpel, I mean which he diſcovers in the Goſpel that he doth, or hath propounded to himſelf; and which he purſues and proſecutes by thoſe means which are revealed therein: Becauſe without a diſtinct knowledge of theſe ends, you can never apprehend nor judge to any purpoſe, the excellencie of the wiſedome in thoſe means, by which he intends (and is every day at work accordingly) to bring thoſe ends to paſſe. His great and ſupream end, is the glorifying of himſelf, yet not ſimply this neither; but the glorifying of himſelf in ſuch or ſuch a way, or, by ſuch and ſuch means, as *viz.* the ſalvation of *ſome*, and the condemnation of others, of that kinde of creature of his, which is called, man, and him conſidered as ſinfull or fallen. And not ſimply this neither, the glorifying of himſelf in the ſalvation of ſome, and condemnation of others: but the glorifying of himſelf like unto himſelf, *i.* upon terms of the higheſt and richeſt advantage for his glory. He might poſſibly have glorifyed himſelf at an under rate, both in the one and in the other, without going that way to work, which now he hath done, for the glorifying himſelf in them. So that the ſalvation and condemnation of men, as they reſpect the glory of God, procured and rais'd by them, have the nature and conſideration of means; though other wiſe, in

reſpect

reſpect of the means by which themſelves are accompliſhed and brought to paſſe, they have the nature of ends. Now when I ſay and affirm, that Gods great end which he diſcovers in the Goſpel as intended to be brought about by him by the means there ſpecified, is the glorifying of himſelf, in the ſalvation and condemnation of men; I doe not intend to deny, but that God hath many other means and deſignes on foot in the Goſpel, for the glorifying of himſelf, beſides theſe (I mean the ſalvation and condemnation of men) but this is that I would ſay; that by what means ſoever beſides theſe, ſpoken of in the Goſpel, God intends to glorifie himſelf, they all relate unto theſe, and are ſubordinate unto and reſolve themſelves into theſe. So that this ſtill remains an unqueſtionable truth, that Gods great end held forth in the Goſpel, is the glorifying of himſelf like himſelf, partly in the ſalvation, partly in the condemnation of men.

In the ſecond place to give you yet ſome further light, whereby to ſee and judge the excellencie of wiſedome in the Goſpel, you muſt conſider, that the glorifying of God by the ſalvation and condemnation of men (at leaſt as now they are devis'd and intended by him to be effected) is an end of very high and glorious conſequence, not onely in reſpect of God himſelf, but of the creature alſo, both men and Angels (I mean thoſe of either kinde, whom God hath, or ſhall think worthy to take into part and fellowſhip with himſelf in his own bleſſedneſſe and glory.) We ſhall not now ſtand to argue or prove this; but take it for granted, as being a thing cleer, and eaſie to be aſſented unto. Onely it is to be taken into conſideration, for our preſent purpoſe; becauſe, if that which is the chief and ſupream end of the Goſpel, were but ſome light, ordinary, or inconſiderable thing, there were no place for that excellencie of wiſedom we ſpeak of, to be found in any means whatſoever for the effecting of it. Yea it argues rather weakneſſe and folly then any thing elſe, to be curious and profound in contriving means for bringing that to paſſe, which being effected is of little or no conſequence unto any.

Thirdly (and laſtly) it is yet further to be conſidered, concerning this end we ſpeake of (the glorifying of God,

in

in the ſalvation and condemnation of men) that it is an end of ſuch a nature and conſideration, that being ſeriouſly thought of, and narrowly inquired into, it will be found to be ſuch a thing, ſuch an end, as was not compaſſable, was not to be attained or brought to paſſe by any other perſon, one or more, nor in any other way, or by any other means, then by him who hath now taken it in hand, and is in the purſuite of it (I mean, God himſelf) and that in that way and method of means, wherein he purſues it. Neither ſhall we ſpend time (for the preſent) in the demonſtration of this; it being a point which frequently comes to hand; and beſides hath no great difficulty in it to be apprehended and beleeved. Onely the remembrance of it, is neceſſary for our preſent occaſion: becauſe, if the glorifying of God upon the terms we ſpeak of (*viz.* in, or by the ſalvation and condemnation of men fallen) were an end, either in it ſelf, or in reſpect of any wiſedom, ſtrength, or power of any creature, or creatures whatſoever, of an eaſie aſſecution, obvious to be attain'd, the wiſedom of God which hath contrived the way and means for the obtaining of it, would be leſſe conſiderable, and the excellencie of it not ſo like to affect, or take the hearts and ſouls of men. For that which every man, or men of ordinary abilities, can doe, no man will much value the doing of it, by whomſoever it be done; no not though there be more then ordinary underſtanding, skill, or wiſdom ſhewed in the effecting of it. But now the glorifying of God in the ſalvation and condemnation of ſinfull men, being not only a thing of a moſt tranſcendent conſequence and import, but of a very difficult, and next to an impoſſible performance, it yields the fulleſt and largeſt opportunity that can be imagined, for the greateſt excellencie of wiſedom that can be conceived, to ſhew it ſelf in contriving a way or means how to accompliſh it. Thus farre then we have prepared your judgements and underſtandings, to conceive of the excellencie of wiſedom in the Goſpel; We have ſhewed you, that the great end there preſented and driven at, will not onely bear or admit an excellencie of wiſedom, but neceſſarily requires, calls aloud for an excellencie of wiſedom, yea the greateſt excellencie in this kinde that can be imagined, for the effecting of it.

In the next place then, let us consider, whether the means, which the Gospel tenders unto us, as contrived and disposed by God, for the effecting of the great end mentioned, hath not all those four characters or properties in it of an excellencie of wisedom, formerly expressed.

The first was this; *a strong and indissolvable connexion with the end*; when a means is such, or so laid, that it cannot lightly prove abortive, or miscarry. And is not the course, and means which God (according to the report of the Gospel) hath taken for the glorifying of himself in the salvation and condemnation of men, a means of this property and commendation? First, can the salvation of men miscarry in the hand of such a Mediatour and Redeemer, so great and glorious, every waies so accomplished for his undertaking in this kinde, as with grace, goodnesse, love, wisedom, power, interest with God, &c. as the Gospel exhibits him to the world, on whose shoulder the weight of this great businesse is here laid? Is not such a Saviour *every* waies *able*, yea and willing, to save those, and that perfectly, that shall *come unto him*? And shall not those most certainly *come unto him* (and so partake of salvation by him) whom God the *Father shall draw*, and perswade effectually to come? Therefore certainly that means which the Gospel holds forth, for the saving of men, is a means of efficacie and power, a means that will reach the end with an high hand, and against, and above, all contradiction. And the salvation of men, upon the Gospel terms, in that way, and by the means we speak of, is every whit as effectuall for the glorifying of God. The glorifying of God, is but the naturall, or essentiall result of the salvation of men in the Gospel way, as will further appear in opening the other properties.

Again for the condemnation of men, we need not question but that there is place and room enough left in the Gospel, for many to perish, and to be condemned, and that most certainly, *viz.* all such as shall not beleeve, and continue unbeleeving unto the end. But that which is mainly considerable in this point, is: not, that many shall certainly perish, notwithstanding the Gospel; but that such provision is partly made in the Gospel, partly here declar'd to be made otherwise, that every

person

perſon without exception, man or woman, that ſhall periſh, notwithſtanding the Goſpel, ſhall yet ſo periſh, and upon ſuch terms, that God ſhall be highly glorifyed in their condemnation, and in their periſhing. His perfect hatred of ſinne, without the leaſt touch or tincture or mixture of any unrighteouſneſſe, yea or any hardneſſe or rigorouſneſſe of proceedings, ſhall only appear in their condemnation: they ſhall periſh with their blood upon their own heads; as we ſhall ſee further in the next particular.

The ſecond property of a means, wherein (in conjunction with the former, and the other two remaining) the excellencie of wiſedom doth appear, is, an equitableneſſe, or cleerneſſe of righteouſneſſe thoroughout; when there is nothing injurious or oppreſſive unto any, nothing that bears hard upon any principle or rule of juſtice or equity, within the whole courſe or compaſſe of the means projected. It is cleerly repugnant to the principles of wiſedom, much more of the excellencie of wiſedom, to put any polluted or diſhonourable ingredient into any means whatſoever, whatſoever the end be which we deſire to accompliſh by it. But when a means is ſtrong and greater then reſiſtance, and yet hath nothing hard, nor unequall in it, the end being excellent and of high concernment, thus farre an excellencie of wiſedom diſcovers it ſelf, in the election and contrivement of it. Now moſt certain and evident it is, that the means contriv'd in the Goſpel, for the glorifying of God, in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, hath this character upon it in the faireſt and moſt viſible manner that can be. For 1. Whom did God injure or deal hardly by in the leaſt, in any thing which relates either to the ſalvation, or condemnation of men according to the Goſpel? The greateſt appearance of hard meaſure offered to any in this kinde, is in the abaſement and ſufferings of *Jeſus Chriſt*. But 1. the common ſaying is, *volenti non fit injuria*; nothing is an injury which is done to a man with his will, and free conſent. Now *Jeſus Chriſt* was moſt willing to take up, and bear that great burthen of the world, that lay upon his ſhoulder in ſhame and ſufferings. *Therefore doth my father love me* (ſaith he) *becauſe I lay down my life, that I may take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf.* Joh. 10. 17, 18.

If it be here ſaid; But what though *Jeſus Chriſt* was never ſo willing to ſuffer what he did; yet might there not be ſome hard meaſure (at leaſt) offered unto him, in putting him upon it? Good diſpoſitions may be wrong'd, not onely when they are forc'd upon the doing thoſe things, which are contrary to them, and which they are unwilling to doe; but when they are wrought upon by perſwaſion, and drawn into a willingneſſe to doe that, which is inconvenient or prejudiciall to them. To this I anſwer (in a word) goodneſſe of diſpoſition when it is attended and guarded with excellencie of wiſedom and prudence, ſo that it knows how to repair any breach, that it ſhall be willing to make upon it ſelf, for the good of others, is not at all obnoxious to any ſuch danger or inconvenience, as to be drawn to any thing prejudiciall to it. Now this was the bleſſed frame and temper of the heart of Jeſus Chriſt; as he had goodneſſe in abundance, even to act him to a willing *laying down his life* for men: ſo had he wiſedom in abundance, even to teach him how, and upon what terms to *lay it down*, ſo that he might receive, or *take it again* [and that indeed upon terms of advantage] and his father (it ſeems) loved him as well, if not as much, for this wiſedom, as for that goodneſſe. This I conceive to be cleerly aſſerted by himſelf, in the Scripture lately cited; *Therefore doth my father love me, becauſe I lay down my life* [ſo, or upon ſuch terms, of innocencie, righteouſneſſe, and will] *that I may* [*viz* in a way of juſtice and equity, and without the leaſt diſhonour unto him] *take* [or rather, receive] *it again* from him.

Again, goodneſſe of diſpoſition is not in danger neither to be wrought upon to inconvenience, by thoſe, who are tender and jealous over it, and withall prudent and wiſe, to know what things are hurtfull and prejudiciall to it. Now the Goſpel informs us, that it was God the Father, who put his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* upon thoſe ſufferings, which he ſuffered for the ſalvation of the world: and he (we know) was farre from working in any unworthy or unkinde manner, upon the ſweet diſpoſition of his Sonne *Jeſus Chriſt*. Nor (doubtleſſe) would he ever have drawn this ſonne of his into ſuch an ingagement, of ſo much ſhame and ſorrow, and ſuffering, no not for the ſalvation

vation of the world, if he had not known how to have recompenſed him to the full for all the labour, and travail of his ſoul therein.

Again; true it is, in the courſe of means, which the Goſpel holds forth as projected and laid by God for the ſalvation of men, the troubles and ſufferings of other men alſo, are included, eſpecially of the Preachers and Miniſters of the Goſpel. Men cannot be ſaved without beleeving, they cannot beleeve without hearing: they cannot hear without Preaching: nor can the Miniſters of the Goſpel preach unto them, without expoſing themſelves to many troubles and perſecutions from the world for their work ſake. I have ſometimes opened that paſſage of the Apoſtle unto you, *Col.* 1.24. from whence we took notice of two things as neceſſary for the ſalvation of men. The firſt, is the making of a Goſpel: the ſecond, the making known, or preaching of this Goſpel: and both theſe (as we ſhewed at large, when time was) require ſufferings: the former, the *ſufferings of Chriſt*; the latter, the ſufferings of thoſe, who ſhall Preach and publiſh this Goſpel in the world. In which reſpect, the Apoſtle here calls his *afflictions* in Preaching the Goſpel, *the filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Chriſt, for his body ſake, which is the Church*; *i.* for the actuall effecting of their ſalvation. But the caſe is every whit as cleer here (if not much cleerer) I mean in the ſufferings of the Apoſtles, and Miniſters of the Goſpel, *viz.* that there is no wrong done unto them by God, whatſoever they ſuffer in this kinde from men, as it was in the ſufferings of Chriſt himſelfe. We ſhall not need ſtand to argue this Col. 1.24.

2. As there is no injurie or wrong unto any perſon whatſoever included in the means, which God hath projected for the ſalvation of men, and the glorifying of himſelf herein; ſo neither is there any thing that entrencheth upon any rule of juſtice or equity, ſimply conſidered, and without relation unto perſons. God might (I mean in regard of his executive power, not his will, for this is doubtfull in the caſe;) he might by a ſtrong hand have ſav'd men, without any injury done either to man, or Angell; and yet have ſeem'd (at leaſt) to have

diſpenſed with ſome main principles or rules of equity or juſtice, in ſaving them; as *viz.* in caſe he had ſav'd them, without any atonement at all made for them; or without an atonement of full conſideration and value; or if he had ſav'd them, whilſt they were yet impenitent, and altogether ſinfull, before their mindes were changed. To take a murtherer, or malefactour in any kinde, immediately upon the murther, or other act of vileneſſe committed, and without any account given, or repentance ſhewen for the ſinne, to make him a King, and ſet him up upon a throne; carries a ſtrong appearance (at leaſt) of injuſtice, or of ſomewhat that is as bad, in it. But ſuppoſe there were any perfect atonement, that it were poſſible for a murtherer to make for the murther he hath committed, and this atonement ſhould be made by him; and further, he ſhould give full ſatisfaction, that he was now become a new man, and abhor'd any inclination unto blood; in this caſe, and upon theſe terms, if he ſhould be countenanced, or prefer'd to any place of dignity or honour, whereof he was otherwiſe capable, there were no colour of injuſtice in it, or unworthineſſe otherwiſe. This is the caſe of the ſalvation of men, according to the tenour of that way and means, which God, according to Scripture information, hath deviſed to effect it. He ſaves, he exempts, no ſinner from deſerved puniſhment (much leſſe advanceth any unto glory) but onely ſuch, for whoſe ſin, or ſins, 1. a plenary atonement hath been made already: 2. who have unfeignedly repented of their ſinnes, and are become new creatures, and perfect haters of ſin.

3. (And laſtly) as to the condemnation of men, every whit as evident it is, that there is not the leaſt touch of injuſtice, nor of any thing that is unequall or hard, in all that method or courſe of means, by which it is effected, or taketh place. Indeed if God ſhould deprive men of all ability and power to repent and to beleeve, and then ſhould be ſtill moving and perſwading, ſtill intreating and beſeeching, urging and preſſing them to beleeve with that patheticalneſſe of affection, wherein he expreſſeth himſelf in the Scriptures, even to thoſe that periſh, as well as to thoſe that are ſaved; this would ſeem very hard, yea ſomewhat harder then injuſtice it ſelf; but this is not ſo.

ſo. As if a King having caus'd a mans leggs to be cut of ſuppoſe he hath done it in a way of juſtice, and according to the law, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, this man having cut off the leggs of another; yet if he ſhould urge, preſſe and perſwade ſuch a man as this, whoſe leggs he hath cut off, to runne a race with thoſe that have their limbs, and are ſwift of foot, and ſhould promiſe him, with many expreſſions of love, exceeding great rewards, if he would quit himſelf in the race like a man, and come as ſoon to the goal, as they that runne with him; this would be a carriage ſavouring more of a bloudy and unmanlike inſolencie over this poor wretch in his miſery, then of any reall affection, grace, or reſpect towards him, or of any deſire of his good: in like manner to conceive that God applieth himſelf with ſuch moving and melting expreſſions of mercy, tenderneſſe of bowels, love, grace, bounty, *&c.* towards his creature, man, as the Scripture from place to place emphatically aſſerts that he doth, yea towards very ſinfull and unworthy men, promiſing unto them life, and glory, and the great things of the world to come, if they will beleeve, repent, and turn unto him; and yet to ſuppoſe withall, that theſe men, to whom he maketh theſe rich and ſweet applications of himſelf, are wholly deſtitute of all power to doe what he requires of them in this caſe, to ſave them from deſtruction, and to conferre the great things promiſed upon them, as *viz.* to beleeve and repent, is to repreſent the glorious God in his greateſt expreſſions of mercy and grace, and love unto the world, rather as laughing the world to ſcorn in that great miſery wherein it is plunged, then as a God any waies truly deſirous, or intending to relieve it, his glorious overtures and profeſſions of love, grace, and favour towards it, notwithſtanding. Some indeed imagine that they ſee ſuch a face of God as this, preſenting it ſelf in the glaſſe of the Goſpel. But, God giving life and opportunity, we ſhall demonſtratively ſhew and prove in due time, that all ſuch conceptions are moſt unworthy of God, and wholly inconſiſtent with thoſe things, which the Scriptures hold forth and teach, as well concerning him, as thoſe gracious abilities which he hath indulgently confer'd upon men, in and through the *ſecond*, notwithſtanding

withstanding their fall in the *first*, *Adam*.

The third property mentioned of an excellencie of wisedome, discovering it self in the contrivement of a means for the compassing such an end as we spake of, was, when the means have a sweetnesse and pleasantnesse of proportion to the end, *i.* (as we further explain'd it) when the strength of that connexion (formerly spoken of) which they have with the end, lies more in the stratagem, *i.* in the manner of contrivance, and hath most of the head in it, requiring as little of the arme, or rightdown force for the execution of any thing, as may be. Now that the means, which the Gospel holds forth, for the bringing about that great end, the glorifying of God in the salvation and condemnation of men, hath this character also, or property in them, is evident upon these two grounds or considerations.

1. Because there is nothing within the whole compasse of this means, which is to be effected by the power of God (I mean by his executive power) but what in a way of reason, wisedom, and equity, may, yea and ought to be effected, yea and is morally, or in the justly-moving-causes effected, before God puts forth his out-stretched arme, for the literall or externall execution of it; nothing is belayed, or spoken of, as to be effected or done by the power of God, but what naturally, as it were, and with a rationall voice, calls for this power of his to effect it, even as grapes when they are fully ripe, call for the hand of the gatherer, and corn when that is ripe, for the hand of the reaper. And

2. Because all other parts or ingredients in the means we speak of, which doe not stand in any executive force or power, but rather in a simple contrivement, doe in the eye of reason, and of a considerate understanding, look with a very delightfull and pleasant aspect, upon that great end. And because the Gospel consists of such a means for the glorifying of God, in the salvation and condemnation of men, as hath been signified unto you, *viz.* which is effectuall and potent as to the obtaining of the end, and yet the potencie of it chiefly consists in the wise contrivement of things in reference to the end, and not in force; hence (I conceive) it may well be that the

Apostle

Apoſtle calls the Goſpel, both the *Wiſdom of God, and the power of God. But unto them that are called, both of the Jews and Grecians, we preach Chriſt, the power of God, and the Wiſdom of God,* 1 Cor. 1 24. By, Chriſt, he means the Doctrine of Chriſt, *viz.* the Goſpel; which he calls *the power of God*; becauſe it is ſo effectually potent for the end; and withall, *the wiſdom of God*; becauſe this potencie chiefly conſiſts in the wiſdom of it. 1 Cor. 1. 24.

Let us begin with the former conſideration. There are but four great turnings, or tranſactions of things (in the generall) within the compaſſe of that means, which the Goſpel holds forth, for the glorifying of God in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, that are to be effected by the unbaring of the mighty arme of God. The firſt, is the raiſing of Chriſt from the dead, with the appurtenances and conſequences thereof. The ſecond the deſtroying of the devil (as the Scripture ſpeaks) *i.* the cutting him off from the exerciſe of that power, which he was intereſſed in, and poſſeſſed of, over all fleſh, firſt, to make men and women doe his work, whilſt they live: ſecondly, after death, to torment them night and day for ever. Now the devil is by a ſtrong hand, reſtrained from the exerciſe of this power, eſpecially in reference to the Saints: and if it be not to all men, it is through their own negligence and default. The third, is the caſting of wicked and impenitent perſons into hell, with the things appertaining thereunto; The fourth and the laſt is, the advancement of the Saints unto their eſtate of glory, with what is requiſite hereunto. I doe not (for the preſent) remember any thing beſides theſe four (with their members and appurtenances) within the compaſſe of the means, we ſpeak of, that is to be tranſacted, by the immediate force and power of the omnipotent arme of God. It is true, the power of God is ſometimes put forth in drawing men unto *Chriſt* when they beleeve; ſo the Saints are ſaid to be kept *by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*; but the power of God we ſpeak of, works in theſe, and ſuch like effects as theſe, by means proportionable to them; as when he makes grapes to grow upon the vine, and *graſſe to grow upon the mountains*, he works both one and the other with his omnipotent 1 Pet. 1. 5.

power (for he hath no other power, but this) but he works by means proportionable unto the things produced by him. But when he rais'd the Lord Christ from the dead, he did not put on any covering of fleſh on his arme, but wrought with it bare: and ſo when he ſhall compell the wicked to goe into hell fire, having rais'd them from the dead (by way of a preparative thereunto) ſo again when he ſhall put the righteous into a condition of perfect bleſſedneſſe and of glory, having rais'd them alſo from the dead, by way of preparation to it; he will, and muſt interpoſe with his almighty power upon the ſame terms, *viz.* without the concurrence or cooperation of any ſecond cauſe, or cauſes, apt or likely to produce theſe great effects. Now then this is that which we ſay, that for all the four particulars mentioned, though they are to be effected, and brought to paſſe, by ſtrength of arme, yet there is ſuch a diſpoſition and contrivance of things precedaneous to every of them, yea, ſo pleaſantly introductive to them, that they will ſeem to be as much (if not more) acts of wiſdom, reaſon and equity, as acts of power; and conſequently there will no more of this executive power of God be ſeen in bringing about that great end of glorifying himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, then needs muſt. To run through the particulars, with as much brevity as may be.

Firſt, for the raiſing of the Lord *Chriſt* from the dead (which is a maſter vein in the body of the means, which the Goſpel preſents unto us for the end ſo often ſpecified, and carries a great breadth in them) 1. Was there not all the reaſon in the world, why God ſhould raiſe him again from the dead? was there, or is there any thing, to diſparage that act of God, either in point of wiſdom, righteouſneſſe, or equity, by which he rais'd him from the dead? Did he not live holily, and blameleſly in this preſent world, whilſt his naturall life ſtood by him? Did he not challenge all his enemies to *rebuke him of ſin*; and none of them accept the challenge? yea and were not his inward parts as *full of grace and truth* (as *John* ſpeaketh) as his life was of the fruits and expreſſions of them? There was no ſpot or blemiſh of ſinne to be found in him, body, or ſoul. So that there was not the leaſt cauſe, nor colour of a cauſe, why God ſhould leave him

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in the hand of death in reſpect of any thing relating to himſelf, or why he ſhould not raiſe him up again: yea the truth is, that thus farre there was no cauſe why he ſhould ſo much as *taſt of death*: much leſſe why he ſhould be left in the hand of death. Again, as touching his undertaking for others (I mean of expiating and making atonement for the ſinnes of the world) it is true, there was reaſon, why in reſpect of this, he ſhould die, or taſt of death; becauſe otherwiſe he could not have performed his undertaking. But there was no reaſon, why having perform'd this, and that with a ſurplusſage of performance, not only dying, but remaining in the bands of death for a longer time then was ſimply neceſſary for that expiation, there was no reaſon (I ſay) in reſpect of this neither, why God ſhould not raiſe him from the dead. Nay what in reſpect of his innocencie, and of his willingneſſe to lay down his life for others, and of his full accompliſhment of what he intended and undertook to doe, yea or was neceſſary for him to doe, for others; it was no way conſiſting with the wiſdom or righteouſneſſe of God, not to have made out that outſtretched arme of his power which he did, to raiſe him from the dead. And in this reſpect it was, that *Peter* ſpake, as he did, *Act.* 2. *Whom God hath raiſed up and looſed the ſorrows of death, becauſe it was unpoſſible that he ſhould be holden of it*, i. of death. How, or in what reſpect, was it *unpoſſible* that *Chriſt* ſhould be *held by death?* It was not *unpoſſible* in reſpect of that nature, wherein Chriſt ſuffered death (this humane nature,) nor was it *unpoſſible* ſimply in reſpect of the Divine nature, wherein he had communion, even whilſt he ſuffered death, as well as in that nature, wherein he ſuffered death; nor was it unpoſſible ſimply in reſpect of that abſolute holineſſe and freedom from ſinne, which was in him; but this *impoſſibility* (I conceive) ſprang chiefly from an utter inconſiſtencie with the righteouſneſſe and goodneſſe of God, to ſuffer a perſon ſo innocent and holy as Chriſt was, and withall, having fully accompliſhed what he undertook by dying, to remain any longer in the bands and priſon of death. So that this act of God in *raiſing up Chriſt from the dead* is (as was ſaid) to be look'd upon every whit as much (if not more) as an act of righteouſneſſe, and of Act. 2. 24.

equity, as of power; yea the righteouſneſſe and wiſdom which together ſhine forth in it, give, as it were, a gracious luſtre, and ſet off, to the power that appear'd in it. *The Kings ſtrength* (ſaith *David*) *loveth judgement*, [or righteouſneſſe.]

Pſal. 99 4.

2. As there was a neceſſity that God ſhould raiſe Chriſt from the dead, in reſpect of the righteouſneſſe of his will, which could not ſuffer ſo righteous a perſon, as he was, to remain under the power of death, without cauſe; ſo was there a neceſſity alſo of the ſame act on Gods part, by way of deſigne, or wiſdom, *viz.* to accommodate that great end we ſo oft ſpeak of, the glorifying of himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men. Neither could, either the one, or the other (I mean, either the ſalvation, or condemnation of men) have taken place, or been brought to paſſe upon the like terms of advantage for his glory, had not the raiſing of the Lord *Chriſt* from the dead, been one ingredient in the means of either. Firſt, they that are ſaved, could not be ſaved (at leaſt upon any ſuch terms) without being juſtified; juſtified they could not be, without beleeving; beleeve they could not, but by and through, and by means of the riſing again of *Jeſus Chriſt* from the dead. *Who by his means* (ſaith *Peter* ſpeaking of *Chriſt*) *doe beleeve in God, that rais'd him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God*: and in this reſpect he is ſaid, *Rom.* 4. to have been *raiſed again for our juſtification. Who was delivered to death for our ſinnes, and roſe again* (or rather, was raiſed again, as the originall hath it) *for our juſtification: viz.* by being hereby put into a paſſive poſture (as it were) or capacity of being beleeved on by men; whereby they come to be juſtified. And as Chriſt was *raiſed again for the juſtification* of thoſe that are ſaved; ſo may he be ſaid (and that in a ſence very conſiderable) to be rais'd again alſo for the condemnation of thoſe that periſh. For were not *Chriſt* preſented and preach'd unto wicked men, as being in ſuch a condition, wherein he is every waies meet and worthy to be beleeved on, their unbelief, with all the ſinne that accompanies it, would not be ſo heavy upon them; nor could God make any ſuch earnings of glory, as now he doth, of their condemnation (as might be ſhewed more at large,

1 Pet. 1. 21.

Rom. 4. 25.

but

but for brevities ſake, *We are* (ſaith *Paul*) *unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh.* 2 Cor. 2. 15. The preaching of Chriſt, as he is deſcribed and held forth in the Goſpel, in regard of the many mighty motives, incouragements, advantages, for beleeving, which of neceſſity muſt be tendered unto men in ſuch a preaching of him, muſt needs render thoſe altogether inexcuſable, who beleeve not. So that though there be ſomewhat of the arme, and executive power, in the means which the Goſpel holds forth for the glorifying of God in the ſalvation and condemnation of men; yet there is no more (at leaſt as to that particular we laſt ſpake of; and we ſhall ſhew the like in others) then needs muſt, and what the excellencie of wiſedome in the contrivement, did require.

A ſecond particular in the means we ſpeak of, wherein the power of the arme of God is engaged and put forth, is the *deſtruction of the devil i.* (as we interpreted it) the forcible reſtraining of him, from tempting men in this life eſpecially above, or beyond, what they are able; and the abſolute reſtraining him from tormenting them afterwards. Now the arme of God in this act alſo, is cloathed with ſo much righteouſneſſe on the one hand, and wiſdom on the other, that the power that is put forth in it, is hereby made every waies beautifull and lovely. Firſt the righteouſneſſe of God, in deſtroying the devil, with the double deſtruction we ſpeak of, appears as to both the degrees or parts of it, thus. It is righteous for God to reſtrain any creature whatſoever from any act, which it hath no right or intereſt to doe, or perform: but the devil hath no right or intereſt to tempt men (leſt of all the Saints, and thoſe that beleeve) above what they are able to bear, or overcome, nor yet to torment them afterwards. Therefore it is every waies juſt and righteous for God to reſtrain him in this kinde: nor is there any thing of any hard reflexion upon God in it.

If you ask me, but why hath the devil no right to tempt even ſuch men as you ſpeak of, and that to that degree you mention? and ſo to torment them afterwards? If ever he had ſuch a right (as you ſeem to imply he had) how did he

loſe it? what act did he, whereby he deveſted himſelf of it?

To this I anſwer (ſuppoſing that for brevity ſake, which already ſhould have been ſhewed ſomewhat more at large, *viz.* that *Satan*, ſometimes had a right, ſuch as it was, to tempt men, whom, and to what degree he pleaſed, and was able) but my anſwer (I ſay) is.

1. That that right which at any time the *devil* had to tempt men, was but a right of permiſſion, or ſufferance on Gods part: it was not any right the devil could challenge or claim, either by his nature, or birth, or by any heroike, or high-deſerving action; for the truth is, that that act of the devils, upon the ſucceſſe whereof, God gave him, or rather (to ſpeak warily in a buſineſſe of this nature) ſuffered him to take a right (or rather a power) of tempting men (the tempting of man in Paradiſe) was an act, ſo farre from meriting any thing at the hand of God, that it was highly provoking in his ſight, as may cleerly be gathered from the arraignment of the ſerpent, who was his inſtrument in it (*Gen.*3.) and the curſe there laid upon him: yea ſome Divines of great worth and learning, conceive, that the *devils* eternall condemnation was not ſealed, or paſt recovery, till he had added this ſinne, unto his former; brought the creature, man, into an eſtate of miſery and death by his temptation (but this we leave to the aſſertors to prove) So then, that right which the *devil* ever had of tempting men, being nothing elſe but a thing permitted unto him by God, not purchaſed by any deſert of his, but meerly out of a diſpleaſure, and offence taken at his creature, man; may certainly with righteouſneſſe enough, be taken away by God upon a very ſlender occaſion given on the devils part; yea it may be taken away at pleaſure, without any occaſion at all given by him, from whom it is taken upon ſuch terms. Yea

Gen. 3. 4.

2. In as much as this power of tempting men in this life (and there is the ſame reaſon of his power of tormenting them for ever, afterwards) was permitted unto the devil by God, onely out of diſpleaſure conceived againſt his creature man, and not at all for any gratification of him; whenſoever this diſpleaſure of God againſt man ſhall be taken off, and healed

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(which is done by mans reconcilement to him by faith in the bloud of Jesus Christ) there is occasion and ground enough for God to recall that permission of his given unto the devil; or otherwise to limit and restrain it, and the exercise of it, as he shall please. And in this respect it is said of Christ that *through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death* (*i.* had a power permitted unto him, to order and manage the affairs of death, temptations, occasions, allurements unto sinne, and all which concern the state, as it were, and kingdom of death, and so to execute torments, which may be called, the treasures of death) *that is, the devil.* Now how did Christ *by death, destroy him* (in the sence formerly given) *who had the power of death, the devil?* Doubtlesse by reconciling the world by it, unto God. For all the right and power the devil had in any consideration against man, being founded (as was said) in that displeasure, which God had conceived against him for sinne; when this displeasure of his shall cease and fall, that right and power of the devil standing upon it, must needs cease and fall with it. Yet Heb. 2. 14.

3. (And lastly) there may be somewhat conceived even on the devils part also, somewhat done by him for which such a destruction as we speak of, might justly be inflicted by God upon him. First, that power of tempting men, especially the Saints, was forfeited by him, when he presum'd to tempt him, who was their head; having no right at all, nor colour of right, to be troublesome to him with any temptation; in as much as he was not in the number of those, with whom God was displeased for sinne: and consequently had no sufficient ground to think, that God had given him any such permission, to tempt him, as he had to tempt other men. Now we know that an abuse of a priviledge or power, is (especially so notorious, as that of *Satan* was in tempting Christ) a just cause of taking it away from him that abuseth it.

There is the same consideration, of the other part of Satans power, I mean his power to torment men after death. His abuse of this power in procuring the Lord Christ to be cut off by a death full of pains and torment, in whom *he had nothing* (as *Christ* himself saith) *i.* had no ground at all of doing any thing Joh 14.30.

thing againſt him, was a juſt ground why he ſhould be deveſted and deſpoiled of it, at leaſt ſo farre, and in reſpect of ſuch perſons, as God ſhould pleaſe to deliver out of his hands. Thus you ſee, that what God doth by a ſtrong hand in deſtroying the *devil*, he is lead unto it in a way of equity and perfect righteouſneſſe. But

2. God was not lead hereunto in a way of righteouſneſſe onely, but likewiſe in a way of neceſſity, in relation to that great deſigne of his we oft ſpeak of (the glorifying of himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men) Firſt, except Satan had been limited and ſtraitned in the exerciſe of that power, which he hath to tempt men; the Saints ſhould have no reſt nor breathing time from his malice in this kinde; he would alwaies be buffeting them, night and day: and conſequently, they would be in no capacity, never injoy any opportunity, of building up themſelves in their moſt holy faith, nor of preparing or making themſelves meet for their glory: their *ſoul* would be *among lions* continually, and they *lie covered with the ſhadow of death*: they would have enough to doe, yea they would ſuffer ſorely in bearing the devils burthens in this kinde: yea they might be brought to hanging down of hands, and waxing feeble of knees, and to deſpair it ſelf. In a word, as our Saviour ſaith (in reſpect of a temporall preſervation) *that except thoſe daies* (ſpeaking of the miſerable times of *Jeruſalem*) *be ſhortned, no fleſh can be ſaved*; ſo have we cauſe to judge and ſay, in reſpect of the eternall preſervation of men; that except Satans power of tempting men had been ſhortned, in an ordinary way and courſe of things, there could *no fleſh*, nor ſpirit neither, have been *ſaved*; at leaſt, not have been ſaved upon thoſe terms of advantage for the glory of God, which now many will (as might be declared more at large; but that we are now upon the ſpeed,) Neither could the condemnation of men have taken place, with ſuch advantage for the glory of God, as now it doth, in caſe the *devil* had not been deſtroyed, i. limited and confined in his tempting power. For the fewer and weaker temptations men are expoſed unto, and tempted with, the more inexcuſable they are if they yield, and quit their loialty and ſubjection unto God. And the more inexcuſable

Matth. 24. 22.

inexcuſable men are, who are condemned, the more is God glorified in their condemnation: and therefore all things are ſo laid in the counſell of his providence, that they which periſh, ſhall be without *excuſe*, Rom.1.20. Rom.3.19. Rom.1.20. 3.19.

2. The caſe is yet more cleer, as concerning his tormenting power. Except he had been deſtroyed in this, the ſalvation of men could have had no place at all. How can thoſe be ſaid to be ſaved, who are allwaies expoſed to the tormenting power of the devil? Yea the condemnation it ſelf of men, could not in that degree have abounded to the glory of God, which now it doth. For if Satan had not been deſtroied by Chriſt, in reſpect of this tormenting power of his, there had not been thoſe mighty incouragements and ingagements upon wicked men to beleeve; and conſequently, nothing that ſinne in their non-beleeving. If they had been as obnoxious to be tormented by devil, in caſe they ſhould beleeve, as they could or ſhould have been without beleeving; they had been in a very great meaſure excuſable, above what now they are, in their unbelief. And look in what meaſure or degree men who are condemned, or periſh, are capable of excuſe, the glory of God is ſo much the more obſcure, and leſſe conſpicuous in their condemnation. Thus then ye ſee, in this ſecond particular alſo (the deſtruction of the *devil*) how that forcible power of God which acteth in it, acteth not onely with the *full* and *free* conſent of righteouſneſſe, but alſo by the counſell, and at the inſtance of that excellencie of wiſdom, which hath contriv'd the whole method and means for the glorifying of him, in the ſalvation and condemnation of men. So that all this while we neither ſee, nor hear of any whit more of the arme for the advancement of this great deſigne then is ſimply neceſſary, and that according to the principles of the moſt exquiſite wiſdom that is.

The 3. particular, wherein the arme of God comes in, and acts with it's glorious force and might, towards the glorifying of him, in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, is the very caſting or forcing of ungodly and impenitent perſons into hell fire; with that which makes way for, and prepares to it, the raiſing them from the dead, and gathering them together before

his judgement ſeat, to receive that diſmall and dreadfull ſentence, *Goe ye curſed.*

Now 1. That this act alſo of Gods power, whereby he forceth wicked and unbeleeving perſons into hell, is led by a fair hand of righteouſneſſe, ſo that there is nothing in it contrary to the greateſt excellencie of wiſdom in that behalf (and there is ever the moſt jealouſie & danger of unrighteouſnes, where there is force and greatnes of power) but that this act of God (I ſay) whereof we now ſpeak, is fully and cleerly righteous, is evident, partly from the demeritoriouſnes or *ſinfulnes* (as the Apoſtle calls it) *of ſin* in generall; partly (and more particularly) from the demeritoriouſnes of the ſin of unbelief.

Rom. 6. 23. For the firſt, *the wages of ſinne* (ſaith the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of ſinne in generall) *is death.* His meaning is, that *death*, i. the eternall ruine, miſery and deſtruction of the creature, is but a ſtipend or conſideration moſt juſtly, due unto, and deſerved by ſin, as wages, or hire for labour, is the moſt juſt and due debt amongſt debts of all kindes, howſoever growing or accrueing. There is no more hardneſſe or inequality in it, that God ſhould deſtroy a creature for ever, that hath ſinn'd againſt him, then there is, that a man who hath hired a labourer to work for him, ſhould give him his hire for his work. Though there is not (haply) a greater truth, yet there is a greater plainneſſe and evidence of equity in it, that God ſhould deſtroy the creature for ſinne, eſpecially who beleeves not, then that he ſhould ſave him for *Chriſts* ſake, who doth beleeve.

Rom. 3. 5. *Is God unrighteous* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Who puniſheth* (*viz.* ſinne, or for ſinne) *God forbid.* The meaning of his Interrogation ſeems to be, is God to be thought, or judg'd unrighteous, becauſe he puniſheth for ſin? Μὴ γένοιτο, *q.d.* at no hand: farre be it from us ſo to imagine or think: implying that there is a moſt manifeſt and apparent righteouſneſſe, or equity in it, that God ſhould puniſh or take vengeance, for ſinne; for otherwiſe, the thought of his being unrighteous in puniſhing, would not be ſo horrid and abominable.

Again 2. As ſinne in the generall, or as it is ſinne, be it what kinde of ſinne ſoever, moſt juſtly deſerves death, ſo that God in inflicting death, is no waies unrighteous, oppreſſive, or hard,

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ſo doth the ſinne of unbelief, in particular, and in a more peculiar manner deſerve death, without which (as we know) no man dieth, or periſheth, for all his other ſinnes. The demeritoriouſneſſe or ſinfulneſſe of unbelief (and conſequently, the equity of God in inflicting death upon men becauſe of it) conſiſts in the great uncapableness of it, or (which is much the ſame) the ſtrong and manifeſt oppoſition which it carries in it againſt the grace of God; which appears chiefly in three things. 1. The great and formidable conſequence or concernment of it unto men: 2. In the abundant reaſon which men have ſo to judge and conceive, I mean, that it is of that deep concernment unto them. 3. (And laſtly) in that abundant means which God hath given, or vouchſafed unto men, to beleeve, or to eſcape all the evil wherewith unbelief (eſpecially in and after death) is accompanied.

First, We all know, that faith and unbelief, are matters of the higheſt and moſt weighty conſequence of all things whatſoever relating to the condition of the creature, man; a great matter of his preſent comfort and diſcomfort, well being, and evil being, depend upon them; but the whole and entire ſumme of his everlaſting condition, his well being, or evil being for ever, depends upon them. *He that beleeves* (ſaith our Saviour) *ſhall be ſaved, i.* ſhall be everlaſtingly bleſſed; and *he that beleeves not* (*viz.* either ſooner or later, firſt or laſt) *ſhall be damned, i.* everlaſtingly miſerable and accurſed. So that this is cleer: unbelief is, amongſt all the irregularities, unworthineſſes, and miſcarriages of men, of the moſt grievous and formidable conſequence unto him. As to beleeve is an act of more value, worth, and conſequence unto men, then a thouſand vertuous and commendable actions of another kinde; ſo is unbelief, at leaſt continued and perſiſted in unto death: of a thouſand times more ſad and grievous conſequence, then the committing of ten thouſand ſinnes of the greateſt provocation otherwiſe. Mark 16. 16.

2. I adde further, that men have reaſon in abundance thus to judge and think of it. First, for thoſe that have the letter of the Goſpel, the caſe is more evident. For they have all the reaſon to beleeve this, which they have to beleeve the Goſpel,

it self; in as much as the Goſpel doth ſo plainly reveal and affirm it. Now that men have reaſon upon reaſon, reaſon in abundance to beleeve the Goſpel, hath been already demonſtratively proved, and may be yet prov'd further. Secondly concerning thoſe, who have onely the heavens, the ſun, moon and ſtarres, and the goodneſſe of God in the government of the world, to preach the Goſpel unto them; theſe alſo have reaſon ſufficient (if not in abundance) to think the ſame thought, and judge the ſame judgement with the other, in the point in hand. For having the Goſpel (I mean, the ſubſtance and effect of it, the willingneſſe and readineſſe of God to be reconciled unto the world) preached unto them by the Apoſtles aforeſaid, the ſun, moon, ſtarres, the patience, goodneſſe and bountifulneſſe of God in the government of the world (as heretofore hath been declared, and may be further argued in due time) they cannot reaſonably think, but that it is of great weight and moment unto them to beleeve that, which is ſo taught them by ſuch a glorious miniſtry ſent from God. This is one of the moſt common dictates and ſuggeſtions of reaſon; that *Deus & natura nihil faciunt fruſtrà*: God and nature doe nothing in vain, from whence it follows ſemblably, in a way of reaſon; that the greater and more conſiderable any thing is, which God doth, the end depending upon it, or relating to it, and for which it is done, is ſo much the greater, and of the more weight and conſequence. Now that act or work of God, whereby he preacheth the Goſpel (as hath been ſaid) unto all the inhabitants of the earth, cannot reaſonably be looked upon but as a very great and highly conſiderable act of his; and ſo the Scriptures from place to place, reports it to be. If it be ſo, ſo highly conſiderable an act of God to preach the Goſpel unto men in ſuch a way, it follows then, in a way of reaſon, that for men to beleeve or not to beleeve, that which God himſelf preacheth, muſt needs be of very high conſequence and concernment unto them. Becauſe there is no other end (I mean no other immediate and direct end) can reaſonably be imagin'd, which God ſhould propound unto himſelf, in preaching a truth, or a Goſpel, but the beleeving of it by thoſe to whom it is preached. Thus then you ſee the

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ſecond point cleer alſo: *viz.* that there is ſufficient reaſon and ground, yea indeed reaſon and ground in abundance, why men even heathen men (as we call them) ſhould conceive and judge that the beleeving, or not beleeving of the Goſpel, are things of the greateſt conſequence and importance unto them. And this is another thing which tends to demonſtrate the great demeritoriouſneſſe, or provoking ſinfulneſſe of unbelief: *viz.* the reaſon and means, which men have to come to the knowledge and conſideration, of the dreadfull conſequence of it. If men had no ground or reaſon at all thus to conceive or judge of it, doubtleſſe the ſinfulneſſe of it would be much eaſed and leſſened thereby.

3. (And laſtly) Another thing, which in conjunction with the two former, compleats the unmeaſurable *ſinfulneſſe* of the ſinne of unbelief, is, the gracious, liberall and plentifull means, which God hath vouchſafed unto men, to bring them to beleeve, or, to make themſelves beleevers.

As for thoſe 1. Who have the letter of the Goſpel, the writings of the Prophets, Evangeliſts, and Apoſtles, to reade and to conſider of, they have all thoſe reaſons and grounds, as means enabling them to beleeve, which have been yet inſiſted upon, to prove the originall of the Goſpel to be from God, as being drawn, partly from the ſtile and phraſe, partly from the matter or ſubſtance of the Goſpel; beſides all thoſe yet remaining of another conſideration, and which are externall, in reſpect of the Goſpel. All which reaſons and grounds diligently conſidered, amount to a rich and plentifull means, whereby to beleeve. A thouſand things are generally and confidently beleeved by the world, the truth whereof ſtands upon no ſuch pillars of evidence and rationall demonſtration, as the truth of the Goſpel doeth.

And 2. For thoſe that are without (I mean, without the Goſpel written, or preach'd, upon ſuch terms as it is preached amongſt us daily) they alſo have ſufficient means (if not large and plentifull) for beleeving. *But I demand* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *have they not heard? yes verily* (ſaith he) *their ſound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* He had ſaid in the verſe immediatly foregoing, that Rom. 10. 19.

*faith comes by hearing:* In this verſe, he ſhews (in an anſwer which he gives to a demand or queſtion put by him) what hearing it is, by which faith comes; or at leaſt what hearing is ſufficient to beleeve upon, or to produce faith. This hearing, he ſaith, is the hearing of that *ſound, and of thoſe Words*, which the heavens, and the day, and the night ſpeak, and *that are gone forth into the ends of the World* (as appears by the place, in *Pſal.* 19. from whence theſe words are added) If you ask me, but what is the *ſound*, or what are the words which the *heavens*, and *the day, and the night*, *i.* the conſtant courſe of the providence of God, in the government of the world, ſpeak in the ears of all nations, and of all people, that *faith* ſhould come by the hearing of them? I anſwer: they are the *Words of eternall life* too, as well as thoſe, which (as *Peter* acknowledgeth) our Saviour himſelf had to ſpeak; yea and did ſpeak upon all occaſions; onely they are not ſo plainly ſpoken, as he was wont to ſpeak: their parable is ſomewhat more dark, and harder to be underſtood. But the ſence and import of what the heavens moving ſtill in their naturall courſe, and the gracious Providence of God, jointly ſpeak in the ears of all fleſh, is, that God is taken off from the fierceneſſe of his diſpleaſure againſt ſinne, and that he holds forth his white flagge, and offers terms and conditions of peace unto the world; and that upon their coming in to him by repentance, they ſhall be received into grace and favour. And what is this but the very tenour, ſumme, and ſubſtance of the Goſpel? which yet is more plain from that of the ſame Apoſtle, *Act.* 14. to the men of *Lyſtra. Who* (ſaith he, ſpeaking of God) *in times paſt ſuffered all the Gentiles to Walk in their own Waies. Nevertheleſſe he left not himſelf Without Witneſſe, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitfull ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſſe.* In reſpect of what was it, that God left not himſelf without witneſſe amongſt the Gentiles, even then when *he ſuffered them to Walk in their own Waies?* (*viz.* without admoniſhing and directing them how to walk, and what to doe, after any ſuch manner as now he doth by the letter of the Goſpel ſent amongſt them) what did the *Witneſſes* the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of, witneſſe concerning God, or, on his behalf? Doubtleſſe he

Pſal. 19. 4.

Act. 14. 16, 17.

he doth not ſpeak here of his God-head, nor of his power, nor of his wiſdom, as if his meaning were, that God left not himſelf *without witneſſe* of theſe (though it be true, that he did not leave himſelf without witneſſe, *i.* means of convincing men, of theſe alſo) but the works of creation, as diſtinguiſhed from the works of providence (whereof he here ſpeaks) are ſufficient *witneſſes* of theſe, according to the tenour of *Rom.* 1.20. and beſides, there are naturall impreſſions of theſe in the ſpirits and conſciences of men, which are *witneſſes* on Gods behalf thus farre. But doubtleſſe, that in God or concerning God, which the Apoſtle here ſaith, that God intended ſhould be teſtified or witneſſed on his behalf unto men, was ſomewhat more ſecret, more out of the way, as it were, of mens common thoughts or apprehenſions; and particularly it was that gracious and good affection which he bears unto the world through Jeſus Chriſt, his inclination unto peace with men, upon their repentance (which is the ſubſtance of the Goſpel.) This appears 1. by the nature or quality of the witneſſes here ſpoken of, which were, Gods giving men *rain from heaven, and fruitfull ſeaſons*, his *filling their hearts with food and gladneſſe*. Such *witneſſes* as theſe, are onely proper to teſtifie grace, and love, and deſire of the good of thoſe, to whom they are given, in him that giveth them. They plainly ſhew, that he that beſtows them, is not extream, uſeth not extremity againſt thoſe that doe amiſſe; and conſequently that he is by one means or other, taken off from the rigour of his juſtice, and ſeverity of his wrath againſt ſinners. And 2. it appears from hence; becauſe *Paul* who was not onely a diligent and faithfull Preacher of the Goſpel where ever he became, but was in ſpeciall manner deſign'd to be an *Apoſtle to the Gentiles*, preached no other doctrine but this at *Lyſtra* (a city of the Gentiles) upon that great opportunity that was now offered him. We cannot think that he ſhould only preach a philoſophicall or metaphyſicall Sermon, concerning the eſſence or naturall properties of God onely; but that which was Evangelicall, and ſavouring of the Goſpel. Now the holy Ghoſt recording either the whole, or (at leaſt) the ſumme and ſubſtance of what he preach'd in this place, reporteth nothing

Rom. 1.20.

Evangelicall

Evangelicall as ſpoken by him, except this be acknowledged for ſuch. So that cleer it is from the Scriptures, that all the world, even thoſe that are moſt ſtraitned and ſcanted in this kinde, thoſe that have not the letter of the Goſpel, have yet ſufficient means of beleeving granted unto them; of beleeving I mean, 1. *that God is*, 2. *that he is a rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him:* which is all the faith or belief that the Apoſtle makes ſimply and abſolutely neceſſary to bring a man unto God, *i.* into grace or favour with him, *Heb.* 11. There are ſeverall other Scriptures that ſpeak home to this point, beſides thoſe argued; particularly, that *Rom.* 2. 4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſſe, and forbearance, and long ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſſe of God leadeth thee to repentance?* The *long ſuffering and goodneſſe of God* are ſaid *to lead men to repentance*, becauſe they teſtifie, according to a rationall and cleer interpretation, a willingneſſe and readineſſe in God, to receive all ſuch into grace and favour with himſelf, who ſhall unfainedly repent of their ſinnes. There is no other conſideration, but this (at leſt, none without this) in reſpect whereof, the *patience* or *bountifulneſſe of God*, can be ſaid *to lead*, *i.* to perſwade or invite, *to repentance*. There is no motive or perſwaſive whereof ſinners are capable *unto repentance*, without hope of pardon upon repentance. But this Scripture we ſhall finde occaſion to argue further ſome other time. In the mean ſeaſon, you ſee it cleer from the Scriptures (and the Scriptures as ye have ſeen, run parallell with evident and cleer reaſon all along in this point) that even heathen men, and thoſe that want the hiſtory of the Goſpel, have yet a ſufficiencie of means whereby to beleeve, and ſo to prevent the wrath and indignation which is to come: in which regard, they are altogether unexcuſable, if they doe it not. We will not here incumber the tenour of our preſent diſcourſe, with arguing or deciding the queſtion, whether, or how any man can be ſaid to have ſufficient means of beleeving, who doth not actually beleeve: this diſpute we ſhall reſpit till ſome better occaſion. In the mean time, moſt certain it is, that they who are deſtroyed and periſh by the hand of God for unbelief, had means, and thoſe ſufficient, whereby to have beleeved; otherwiſe they would

Heb 11 6.

Rom 2 4.

would not be unexcuſable; no, not though they ſhould be found negligent in improving thoſe means, which they had. For he that certainly knows, that all that ever he can doe, ſhould he put forth himſelf to the uttermoſt, is not able to compaſſe his end; is in a great meaſure excuſable, though he attempts nothing at all. But we ſhall not now ſtand upon this. Thus then you have the third and laſt thing, which makes the ſinne of unbelief, ſo exceedingly ſinfull, ſo abundantly demeritorious as it is; *viz.* the voluntarineſſe of it, men having plentifulneſſe of means vouchſafed from God, to keep themſelves from the defilement of it. Put all the three now together, and you will cleerly ſee the great unworthineſſe and demeritoriouſneſſe of it riſing up from them all jointly. 1. The ſinne of unbelief, is (above all ſinnes whatſoever) of the moſt diſmall and dreadfull conſequence unto men. 2. There is light enough for men, to come to the cleer knowledge of it, I mean that it is of that dreadfull conſequence. 3. (And laſtly) men have a ſufficiencie of means, a price put into their hand, wherewith to redeem themſelves out of the hand of it. Now then that man or that woman, that in the face of three ſuch conſiderations as theſe, ſhall either ſit ſtill, or quit themſelves but looſly and careleſly to recover their ſouls out of the ſnare of unbelief, commit a ſinne (doubtleſſe) of the greateſt and moſt deſperate oppoſition to all principles of reaſon that can be; and conſequently, a ſin of the greateſt demerit, and higheſt provocation, in the ſight of God.

Thus you ſee, what between the demerit of ſinne in the generall (I mean, of all other ſinnes wherewith men defile themſelves) and the great demerit of unbelief in particular, the righteouſneſſe of God in puniſhing and deſtroying wicked and ungodly men, *appears in perfect beauty:* there is nothing hard, nothing unequall in it: yea there is nothing in it, but what commends the wiſdom of God it ſelf, as well as his righteouſneſſe, or perfect hatred of ſinne. For as it would be an unſavoury thing, and contrary, as well to principles of wiſdom and prudence, as of juſtice, in a civil magiſtrate that bears the ſword, and tending to his great diſparagement and diſhonour, if either he ſhould not puniſh thoſe that tranſgreſſe the laws, which he is

to execute, or if he ſhould puniſh them with puniſhments unſutable, and unproportioned to their offences, whether on the right hand, or on the left: in like manner, it would reflect dishonour upon the ever bleſſed and glorious name of God (and ſo be contrary to the excellencie of wiſdom) if he ſhould either not puniſh wicked and ungodly men, the tranſgreſſours of his law, at all; or if he ſhould puniſh them, and not ſomewaies (at leaſt) proportion both the nature, and degree of their puniſhment, to their ſinne. So that all things conſidered, this act alſo of the powerfull arme of God, whereby he caſts ſinners into hell, is no more then what neceſſity requires of him; is an act as well of righteouſneſſe and of wiſdom, as of power.

The 4. and laſt great act of the power of God to be put forth and exerciſed in bringing about that great deſigne we have oft mentioned (the glorifying of himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men) is that whereby the Saints ſhall be advanced, or put into an actuall poſſeſſion of their glory, with all things requiſite hereunto, as the *raiſing of them from the dead*, the *changing of their vile bodies*, &c. Now that this act alſo of his power is drawn forth by principles of reaſon, equity, and of the moſt excellent wiſdom, is evident thus; by theſe and ſuch like conſiderations.

1. That God ſhould reward his friends and faithfull ſervants that have done his will and ſought his glory (as the Saints have done) is reaſonable and equall in the eyes of all fleſh: ſuch an act as this, is no waies obnoxious to any ill reſentment, or interpretation whatſoever. Nay if God ſhould not doe it, there are thouſands of his creatures that ſhould (in ſuch a reſpect) be more excellent then he. There is no man of ingenuity, and that favours the things of his honour, but that will remember and conſider proportionably to his power, the faithfulneſſe of friends and ſervants ſhewed unto him.

2. When men have erected and ſet up any kinde of exerciſe, or tryall of maſteries, as by running, wraſtling, or the like, and have made their orders and laws for thoſe that ſhall exerciſe, and thus have drawn men of activity and worth in that kinde from ſeverall parts, to try their ſtrength and activeneſſe, by

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ingaging themselves in the exercise; it is but reason and equity, that he that striveth, and *striveth lawfully* (as the Apostle speaks) *i.* observing all the laws and orders of the exercise, and overcoming, should be crowned, or receive the *bravium*, or price, that is held forth, for the conquerour. Now God in the Gospel propounds (as it were) a noble exercise of faith and holinesse; he hath appointed his laws and orders for this exercise; he hath designed a crown of life, and of immortall glory, to those that shall overcome; he draws persons from all quarters of the world, whose hearts will serve them, to ingage in his exercise. Now then it is but just and reasonable, that those that doe strive, and *strive lawfully*, and overcome, should receive the reward that is promised, and consequently should be by a strong hand put into possession of eternall life.

3. When souldiers have stood by their Generall, indured much hardship, and ventured their lives with him, and for him, in any hard and hot service; in case the day goes on their side, and their Generall triumphs, it is but equall that such souldiers should partake according to their measure, of the joy and honour of the triumph with him. Now the Saints are good souldiers of *Jesus Christ*: they stand by him in this present world: they undergoe much hardship from the world for his sake; they are partakers with him of his sufferings, as well by mortification, as by persecutions by men; therefore Jesus Christ himself triumphing in eternity of life and glory, it is but equall that they should partake of the same triumph with him. This the Scripture it self acknowledgeth for equall. *Now if we be dead with Christ, we beleeve that we shall also live with him.* We beleeve, *i.* we have cause or reason to beleeve it, *viz.* because of the equitablenesse of it. So in another place: *If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.* The Apostle doth not argue these consequences (as he doth many others) because they are so naturall, and evident in, and of, themselves. Yea Rom. 6 8. 2 Tim. 2 11, 12.

4. And lastly, there is not onely an equitablenesse in the thing (I mean, that the Saints shall be highly honoured by God) but there is an excellencie of wisdom in it also, yea that

they ſhould be honoured with the height of honour, that (according to the Goſpel) ſhall be conferred and caſt upon them by God; and that in a double conſideration.

1. Becauſe great and excellent recompences and rewards given by men for ſervices done unto them, being within the compaſſe of their means, or abilities to give, without any ſenſible prejudice to their eſtates, are much for their honour, and for the advancement of their intereſts in the opinions and eſtimations of men. A great and bountifull reward, is a kinde of artificiall and pleaſant picture of a mans worth, drawn by himſelf, or with his own hand. For he that is liberall in recompenſing ſervices done unto him, ſeems to be conſcious of ſome ſpeciall worth in himſelf; and that which he doth in this caſe, above the uſuall rate of others, to doe out of conſcience; as conceiving, that he that hath done any good office to him, hath done a better deed, and ſo deſerves a better reward, then if he had done the ſame, yea or a greater, to another man. For certainly to ſave the life of a good man, and who is like to be a benefactour unto many, is a better act, and more worthy a reward, then the ſaving of the life of an ordinary, or undeſerving man: and ſo it is proportionably in other ſervices done, or to be done reſpectively, to ſuch perſons: whereas ſuch perſons, who having means and opportunity to deal bountifully by thoſe that ſerve them, and yet ſhould reward them poorly; they doe by ſuch ſparingneſſe (in effect) acknowledging themſelves to be perſons of little worth or value; and that they that ſerved them, had done onely that which was next to nothing; and therefore a ſlender conſideration was reward enough for them. So then the great and glorious God, in rewarding thoſe that have ſerved him, with crowns and kingdoms, and the great things of eternity, draws, as it were, a lively and happy portraicture of his own infinite worth and goodneſſe; and declares in the ſight of heaven and earth, and hell, at what an high rate he values himſelf, and his own glory, by ſhewing himſelf ſo above meaſure bountifull unto thoſe that ſerve him.

2. There lay a neceſſity upon God to lift up his Saints as high in bleſſedneſſe and glory, as now he intends to doe, in reſpect

reſpect of that foundation, which he hath laid to build this fabrique or building upon, I mean his onely begotten Son *Jeſus Chriſt*; that ſo there might be a comlineſſe of proportion, a correſpondencie, between the foundation, and the ſuperſtructure, or that which is built upon it. If men ſhall lay either ſilver or gold, or precious ſtones for their foundation, and build nothing but a little hay, or ſtubble, or wood upon it, would not all men laugh at them (as our Saviour ſpeaks in a caſe not much unlike) and ſay; they *began* glorioufly, but they *finiſh* ſhamefully. So, God having laid the foundations of the bleſſedneſſe of his Saints, in his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* and in his bloud (as indeed he had none other foundation to lay for that building) if he ſhould not build ſomewhat proportionably thereunto, the glory of the foundation would be a ſhame and diſhonour to the reſt of the work, and ſwallow up all the beauty and excellencie thereof. The truth is, that (to ſpeak after the manner of men, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in ſome caſes) God will have much adoe to finde materialls, ſtones ſumptuous or magnificent enough, either in heaven or in earth, or in all his dominions, to build up the glory of the Saints, upon any ſuch terms, but that the glory of the foundation will be a kinde of overſhadowing to it, when he hath done. In other buildings the ſuperſtructure ſometimes chargeth, and overchargeth the foundation: but in this building we ſpeak of, it rather is, and will be contrary; the foundation is, and will be, too weighty in glory for the ſuperſtruction; yea though this be as weighty in glory, as glory it ſelf can make. *For even that which was made glorious* (ſaith *Paul*, ſpeaking of the miniſtration of the law) *had no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory which excelleth* (meaning, in the miniſtration of the Goſpel.) In like manner, though the bleſſedneſſe, which ſhall be veſted in the Saints, ſhall be glorious, yea excellently glorious, in it ſelf; yet being compared with that exceſſe and ſuper-abundance of glory in the foundation, there will be found as little glory in it, as could reaſonably be expected; though as much alſo, as the capacity of the ſubjects will well bear. And therefore to be ſure, the wiſdom of God (mark, I doe not the goodneſſe, the love, the bounty of God, or the like, but) the wiſdom of

God will put him upon ſearching out whatſoever is rich, whatſoever is precious, whatſoever is excellent, whatſoever is glorious, whatſoever hath the leaſt ingredience of happineſſe in it, whether in heaven or in earth, to build up the bleſſednesſe of his Saints with, to ſalve, as it were, it's own glory. Conſider whether that of the Apoſtle doth not riſe as high as all this: Rom. 8. 32. *He that ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* The interrogation, *How ſhall he not*, &c. is marveilouſly emphaticall and concluſive. It is as if he had ſaid; If we doe but grant or ſuppoſe, that God hath given up his Sonne unto death for our ſakes, and for our good; we cannot reaſonably imagine, ſhould we ſtudy never ſo ſeriouſly, with never ſo much intenſneſſe of minde and thought, to raiſe and form ſuch an imagination within us, how it is poſſible, or any waies conſiſtent with the wiſdom of God, to give us any thing leſſe then *all things*, for the compleating of our happineſſe. Thus we have ſhewed you how that all that power, all thoſe acts of power to be performed by God, within the compaſſe of that means, or any part of that means, which he hath projected for the glorifying of himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, are both all clothed with wiſdom, and that they are no more, none other, then what are ſimply neceſſary to the accompliſhment of his end.

We ſignified unto you (in the ſecond place) that all other parts or ingredients in the means we ſpeak of, *viz.* which doe not ſtand in any executive force or power, but in a ſimple contrivement, doe in the eye of reaſon, and of a conſiderate underſtanding, look with a very pleaſant, delightfull, yea with a divine aſpect, upon the great end, ſo oft, and lately mentioned. To take all particulars in this kinde into conſideration, would be a long work, and require much time, and (I fear) prove weariſome unto you. We ſhall onely touch ſome of the moſt conſiderable of them. Gods end being (as hath been ſtill ſaid, and once proved) the glorifying of himſelf like himſelf, in the ſalvation and condemnation of men, it was neceſſary for him ſo to provide for the effecting of the one, and ſo to make way for the execution of the other, not onely that none

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of his glorious attributes or perfections might ſuffer, or be diſparaged in either; but that by means of the one and the other jointly taken, the glory of them (I mean of thoſe attributes of his) might be diſcovered and made known, and that to an excellent degree of manifeſtation. For the bringing to paſſe the former of theſe (the ſalvation of men) upon the terms mentioned; three things were neceſſary for God to doe (in the generall: the two former whereof make way likewiſe for the latter, I mean, the glorifying of himſelf like himſelf in the condemnation of men.) But it was neceſſary (I ſay) for God, in reference to both theſe great tranſactions, as well the ſalvation, as condemnation of men. 1. To put himſelf into an honourable capacity of treating with man about the great things of his ſalvation. 2. To make him capable of ſuch terms, upon which he might, with the ſafety of his own glory, ſave him. 3. (and laſtly) If he meant to make ſure work of the ſalvation of man, it was further neceſſary for him, to provide, not onely that men might be capable of thoſe terms, upon which he might honourably ſave them, but that they ſhould actually yield unto, and accept of them. In all theſe you ſhall ſee ſtrains of wiſdom indeed, ſuch as are enough to make all the wiſdom under heaven abaſed.

For the firſt of theſe: Neceſſary (I ſay) it was that God ſhould put himſelf into an honourable capacity of treating with man about his ſalvation. For man being a traytour and a rebell, by reaſon of ſinne committed againſt him, and ſo ſtanding as a guilty perſon before him worthy of death, unclean, unholy, unrighteous; it was no waies agreeable with the infinite holineſſe and purity of Gods nature, and that diſtrict ſeverity againſt ſinne, which is in him, to fall immediately, and without any conſideration at all intervening, upon a treaty with him, about the great affair of his ſalvation and glorification. And though it's true, he might have ſaved men without any preceeding treaty with them about it; yet he could not have glorified himſelf in this ſalvation of theirs, upon thoſe rich terms, which now, as he hath contrived matters in order thereunto, he may, and will doe. It is a ſaying in naturall philoſophie, that *natura non conjungit extrema, niſi per media*: and again,

again, that *natura non facit saltum*. i. *nature*, [*i.* God, in the course of nature] *is not wont to join extreams together, but by somewhat of a middle nature between them*: and again, *nature doth not leap*. Nor would it have stood with the wisdom of God, considering the infinite holinesse of his nature, and the transcendent excellencie of his majesty and glory, to have clozed in such a treatise as we speak of, with that polluted and imbased dust and ashes, called man, after that grand rebellion of his, without some mediatory consideration or other, yea and that of such weight, which might render this act of his, in treating with such a creature, every waies honourable to him. Now what other consideration can there be imagined, so proper and full, to justifie the glorious God in admitting that most unworthy creature of his, man, to a treaty of grace with himself, as that his own Son *Jesus Christ*, should be made man, and in this nature of man, suffer death, and that by way of atonement, for the sinne of man? Now to judge (in part) of the proportion or meetnesse of the consideration we speak of, for that great end and purpose mentioned, *viz.* the making way, and that with honour, for God to condescend to a gracious treaty, with his guilty and sinfull creature, man, we must conceive after this manner. Suppose a subject or person of mean quality hath injured and provoked his Prince, let the injury be supposed never so great, and the provocation never so deep and just, yet in case any thing shall be done by any of the kindred of him that hath so injured this Prince, and in relation to his offence, every waies as valuable for the accommodating, or repairing the honour, or to the benefit of the Prince otherwise, as the injury or provocation was in dishonour or discontent in any kinde unto him, this Prince hath now a consideration before him, upon which with the safety of his honour (I mean, even as men count honour) he may send to that subject of his, and be so farre pacified towards him, as to treat with him, and offer him conditions of pardon and reconcilement; because in this case he is no looser by him; and if he will be perswaded to change his minde, and to vow loyalty, and love, and faithfulnesse unto him, he hath honourable grounds to forgive him, and to be friendly unto him afterwards. In

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like manner, God having received that ſervice and that obedience from the hand of ſuch a perſon as *Jeſus Chriſt* is, being of the nature or kindred of man, and that in relation to the ſinne and provocation of man, which is every waies as conſiderable in matter of glory to him, as the ſinne of man was in diſhonour and provocation; he may upon this conſideration, without the leaſt touch of diſparagement to his holineſſe, purity, wiſdom, or any other attribute whatſoever, offer terms of reconciliation and peace, to him that hath provoked him. The reaſon is, becauſe now he is no looſer by him: and therefore if he will be perſwaded and won by offers and terms of grace, ſuch as are meet for God to offer, to change his minde, and to ſwear homage and fealty, love and faithfulneſſe unto him for the future, he is at perfect liberty to receive him unto grace and favour; and to doe further unto him whatſoever his ſoul deſireth, in any way of goodneſſe and bounty. Not as if God were bound, preſently to forgive men their ſins, and to take them into his ſpeciall favour, upon what, or, becauſe of what Chriſt hath done, or ſuffered for them (which ſeems to be the ſence of many) no, Chriſt did not ſatisfie for any mans ſinnes in ſuch a ſence, or upon ſuch terms. But therefore *Chriſt* is ſaid to have ſatisfied for the ſins of men, or (which is the ſame, in Scripture, and therefore in better and more proper, language) to have made an atonement for men, or for the ſins of men, becauſe he hath ſo farre pacified and reconciled God unto the world, that he is willing, notwithſtanding their great ſinne, and unworthineſſe, and affront put upon him, to beat a parley, and to condeſcend to offer propoſitions and terms of life and peace unto men; yet ſo, that they who will not condeſcend (or rather indeed, that will not aſcend) firſt or laſt, to the conditions and terms offered by him, *i.* that will not beleeve, ſhall have no further benefit, by any thing he hath either done or ſuffered for them. Nor will it follow, that they for whoſe ſinnes Chriſt hath ſatisfied, muſt needs by vertue of this ſatisfaction, be preſently juſtified, and ſaved; or, that God otherwiſe ſhould be unjuſt, *viz.* if having received ſatisfaction, he ſhould condemn men for thoſe ſinnes, for which he hath been ſatisfied. The reaſon is becauſe the ſatisfaction of Chriſt,

being an ordinance of God, I mean, a means of and for the justification and salvation of men, meerly arbitrary and depending upon his will and pleasure, as well in the operation, as in the being of it; it cannot be conceived to extend any further, nor to produce its effects in any other way, or upon any other terms, then his will and pleasure is, that it should produce them. Now the Scriptures are very cleer and pregnant in this, that the satisfaction, and sufferings of Christ, doe not justifie or save any man simply or by themselves, but by and through a mans beleeving, as on the contrary, that they are satisfactory and justificatory in abundance, to all without exception, in case they shall beleeve *So God loved the World* (saith our Saviour) *that he gave his only begotten Son*; not simply that men, or any man *should have everlasting life by him*; but that *whosoever beleeves in him*, shall not *perish, but have everlasting life*. Notwithstanding the love of God, notwithstanding the guift of Christ unto the world, yet without beleeving, there is no escaping eternall death, no obtaining everlasting life. Why? *viz.* because the love of God and the guift of Christ, being both voluntary, they justifie, they save, no further, no otherwise, upon no other terms, then the will and good pleasure of God is they should. Now the will of God touching salvation by *Jesus Christ* unto any man, is none other, but that he should be saved by *Christ*, through beleeving. Fully consonant hereunto, is that of the Apostle, *Rom.* 3. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation* [*i.* an actuall or personall propitiation] *through faith in his bloud.* Though justification be free, though through the grace of God, though through the *redemption which is by Christ Jesus*; yet no justification, by any, nor by all of these actually accrues unto any man without beleeving.

Ioh. 3. 16

Rom. 3. 24, 25.

If it be objected; but if men be not completely justified by *Christ*, or by the satisfaction of *Christ* without beleeving, then beleeving adds somewhat to Christ, or to the satisfaction of Christ; makes this efficacious unto justification, which (it seems) in it self is weak. I answer (briefly.)

No; Faith doth not adde in the least to the nature, value, or

or efficacie of Christs satisfaction, it onely interresseth men in the valne and efficacie of it; both which were in it in as ample and full matter, before men beleeve, as they are after. The fire whilst a man keeps at a distance from it, doth not warm him, when he comes neer it, it doth: yet his coming neer doth not make the fire any whit hotter, then it was before; onely it gives him interest and communion in the heat of it, which he had not before. So the applying of a plaster to a sore, doth not adde any healing vertue to it, nor make it any whit more healing in the nature of it, then it was before; onely it interesseth him, that hath the sore to which it is applied, in that healing vertue which it had, before it was applied. Thus then you see how mens sins may be said to be fully satisfied for, and atoned by Christ, yea as fully as it is possible for them to be; and yet men remain under the guilt of them, and perish everlastingly because of them, and that without the least touch or shadow of disparagement to the justice of God. But we may have occasion to speak further into this point some other time: where we may further cleer the difficulty; how it may stand with the justice of God to accept Christs satisfaction for the sins of men, and yet destroy men for them notwithstanding: and indeed it is a point well worth our inquiring into; because generally we doe not understand the counsel and minde of God in it aright. If we did, it would set us at perfect liberty from some of the most ensnaring intanglements in the Antinomian way; and quite break the credit thereof: and the very truth is, that Antinomianisme (as we call it) is nothing else, but a systeme or body of the due and lawfull consequences of their opinions, who most fiercely oppose it. But this onely by the way.

Thus then you see, as to the first of the three particulars mentioned, how God hath put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with men, though vile, sinnefull, and rebellious, about the great things of their salvation, by giving his own Son, *Jesus Christ* to be made man, and by gaining his consent, in this nature, to make an atonement by his death for their sinnes. And the truth is that there was no other way or means for him to doe this (or at least none like unto it) but that

which hath been declared, nor was it (as hath been ſaid) for the glory of God to have done it, to have ſaved men, otherwiſe then by way of treaty firſt had with them; as might be ſhewed at large, if it were neceſſary; The Apoſtle himſelf implies as much, as all that hath been ſaid in the point hitherto, 2 *Cor.*5.19. ſaying, *that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* 2 Cor 5. 19. Firſt, God intending to ſave the world, intended to doe it by the way of reconciling thoſe to himſelf, whom he meant to ſave, before he ſaved them: he did not intend to take them in the midſt of their enmity and hatred, whilſt their hearts were yet full of wickedneſſe and rebellion againſt him, and ſo put them into heaven: no, his method and deſigne was, firſt, to ſlay that enmity in their natures againſt him, and to reduce them to terms of friendſhip and love; which was neceſſary to be done by a way of treaty and capitulation with them in this world. But ſecondly, how or which way ſhould God come at a treaty with man, with honour? It was not (as we ſaid) agreeable to the infinite holineſſe of his nature, or greatneſſe of his majeſty (nor did his wiſdom ſo apprehend it) to offer treaty or terms of peace unto man being in actuall rebellion againſt him, without ſome conſideration mediating and leading thereunto, and that ſuch as was meet to ſway in a buſineſſe of that high and great import. Nor indeed was he as yet provided of ſuch terms, or capable of making ſuch propoſitions or offers unto man, which were like to take with him, or to bring him over in love unto him. How then did he goe to work? what did he, to prepare himſelf a way, to treat with his wretched creature, man, with honour? *He was in Chriſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle) he went, and got, or put himſelf into *Chriſt*, [God and man] having firſt contrived and diſpoſed of him for the purpoſe, *i.* prevailed with him, after a few years ſpent holily and blamelеſſly in the fleſh, to yield to die for the ſins of men. Now God having thus put himſelf, as it were, in Chriſt, thus prepared and wrought for his deſigne, being now provided for a treaty, in him he comes forth, invites the world to a treaty, and offers ſuch rich and gracious terms of love and peace, which are moſt effectuall and likely to take the world off from their hatred

and

and enmity againſt him, and to bring men over unto him in love, and with all affections of loyalty and honour. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*, but how? by what engine doth God attempt ſuch a piece as this? by *not imputing their ſinnes* [ or treſpaſſes ] *unto them* ( ſaith the Apoſtle ) *i.* by propoſing and promiſing unto them a free pardon of all their ſinnes, with all the rich and bleſſed conſequents of ſuch a grace as this is, as purchaſed by Chriſt, and ready for them, if they will but love him, and diſavow and abandon, that ſinfulneſſe in their hearts and lives, which are enmity to him. Now the glorious God, though he hath an heart infinitely larger then the ſand upon the ſea ſhore ( which was the meaſure of *Solomons* wiſdom ) my meaning is, though he be infinite in wiſdom, yet doubtleſſe he hath not another word to ſpeak unto the heart of the world, ſo proper, or ſo effectuall for the gaining in, and *reconciling the world* unto himſelf, as this; that their ſinnes are pardoned, and ſhall never *be imputed* unto them, if they will beleeve. The root of all that hatred and enmity which is in the natures of men againſt God, is the want of a ſence of that love of God towards them, which he hath abundantly manifeſted, by providing for them free pardon and forgiveneſſe of all their ſinnes, if they will but accept of it. Make men but truly apprehenſive and ſenſible of this, and you ſhall without any more adoe *reconcile them unto* God, and heal that root of bitterneſſe, I mean that hatred and enmity againſt him, which is in them.

1 King 4.29.

Now in the preparation unto, and carriage of this great tranſaction of God deſcribed and opened unto you from the Scriptures, his putting himſelf ( as I call it ) into an honourable capacity of treating with his creature, man, there are many particular ſtreins and paſſages of an excellencie of wiſdom, the conſideration whereof would require much more time, then I beleeve you would willingly allow upon this occaſion; as about the incarnation, conception, birth, circumciſion, baptiſme, the life, death, reſurrection, aſcention of Jeſus Chriſt; the carriage of all which in that variety of circumſtances, which the Goſpel relates, is full of wiſdom, and looks with a very pleaſing face in them all upon that great and bleſſed

transaction we speak of, the treaty which God hath at this day on foot with the world, about the great things of their peace: But we must not now insist upon any of them. Again

2 As it was necessary, in reference to the great end, oft specified, for God to put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with his creature about matters of salvation; so was it no lesse necessary for him, to make this creature of his, capable of such terms, I mean of yielding or condescending to such terms, upon which God might not onely with the safety, but with the advancement of his own glory, save him, in case he accepts of them; or otherwise condemn him, if he rejects them. If you ask me, 1. What are the terms, which the creature must be made capable of, that God may be glorified like himself, either in the salvation, or condemnation of it; I answer, the terms are, only beleeving in God through Jesus Christ with a faith unfeigned, and which works by love: the creature must be made capable hereof, that God may be glorifyed, either in his salvation, or condemnation.

If you ask me (in the second place) but what necessity is there, that the creature should be made capable of these terms, that God may be glorifyed in his condemnation? We grant it necessary, in respect of his being glorifyed in his salvation, but we conceive no necessity of it in respect of Gods glory, in his condemnation.

I answer briefly (for the present, hoping ere long to give you a further account of what I shall now say) there is this necessity of it: if God should not make men capable of beleeving, I mean, indue men with such principles, abilities, or guifts, of reason, judgement, memory, understanding, by the diligent improvement whereof they might come to be convinced, of a willingnesse or readinesse in him to receive them into grace and favour, upon their repentance and turning to him (upon which conviction, that repentance and turning unto God we speak of, alwaies follows) they which are condemned would have their mouths open against Gods proceedings with them thereunto, and furnished with an excuse. Now look whatsoever men shall be able with reason to say for themselves,

or

or in their own defence, why they ſhould not be condemned; it will be ſo much out of the way of the glory of God, in their condemnation, in caſe he ſhould condemn them. And therefore the Scripture tells us, that God hath dealt ſo with men, and means to doe ſo ſtill, that if they be condemned, their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped, and all manner of excuſe taken from them. *For the inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world, are cleerly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead, ſo that they are* [or, may be] *without excuſe.* And again, *Rom* 3. *Now We know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world become* [ὑπόδικος τῷ θεῷ] *i.* obnoxious, or ſubject to the judgement of God; cleerly implying, that men, though wicked and ſinfull, yet would not be *obnoxious to the judgement of God*, [*i.* ſinnefull and wicked enough for him to deſtroy] if they could plead any tolerable excuſe for their ſinnes, or why they ſhould not be deſtroyed. Now of all, and all manner of excuſes in the world, that ever were alledged or can be alledged by any man, for not doing what he was commanded to doe, there is none more plauſible, none more reaſonable or fair, then this, to ſay, that he was not able to doe it, neither mediately, nor immediately, or that it was a thing impoſſible for him to doe: yea to be able to ſay this with truth, and out of knowledge, it is not properly to make an *excuſe* (as we commonly take the word) but it is to ſpeak that, which according to the ſtricteſt rules of reaſon and equity, ought to exempt a man from all cenſure and puniſhment, though he doth not that, which was commanded him.

Rom. 1. 19. 20. 21.

chap. 3. 19.

Beſides, if God ſhould offer and promiſe unto men life and peace and ſalvation (as we know he doth to thouſands, who never accept of his offer, and ſo periſh everlaſtingly) yea and preſſe upon them with many expreſſions of love, tenderneſſe, and great compaſſions, even *beſeeching them* by his Miniſters (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *that they would be reconciled unto him*, having taken away (though juſtly) that power from them, whereby they might have been able to have done themſelves good by accepting thoſe offers of grace, if it had not been

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taken from them, and ſhould conferre none other upon them in the ſtead, this would be a very ſtrange diſpenſation or deportment towards poor miſerable creatures, altogether unworthy that God, who is the father of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, and in him, the father *of mercies, and God of all conſolation*. Suppoſe a Prince had in a way of the moſt regular juſtice, and according to the laws, by which he rules, and ought to put in execution, and for ſome offence deſerving ſuch a puniſhment, cauſed a mans tongue be cut out of his head; and afterwards ſhould come to this poor creature, and make ſuch a propoſition or offer as this to him (and withall bear him in hand, that he did it out of much love, and tender reſpects to him) that if he would give him a cleer anſwer by word of mouth, to ſuch a queſtion as he ſhould ask him, he would conferre great riches upon him, and make him honourable in the ſtate, *&c.* could ſuch a deportment as this, be looked upon as ſavouring in the leaſt of any love, or deſire in the Prince to doe this miſerable creature any good, and not rather of a moſt tyrannicall and cruell ſpirit, taking a delight to deride and inſult over perſons in miſerie? It were eaſie to ſhew many other neceſſities, beſides theſe, which lay before God to render men capable of yielding or aſſenting unto his propoſitions and terms of grace, if he meant to glorifie himſelf like himſelf, in their condemnation. But the fuller examination of this buſineſſe we ſhall referre to a further occaſion: where we ſhall anſwer likewiſe the objections uſually brought againſt it. As to that objection wherewith this opinion (perhaps) is burthened in the thoughts of many, as *viz.* that it is an *Arminian* doctrine, and maintains free-will, with the like: we ſhall anſwer no more for the preſent, but this; that if it be a doctrine aſſerted by *Paul* and *Peter* (as moſt aſſuredly it is) it ought to ſuffer no diſparagement for being found amongſt the tenets of *Arminius*. *It is a faithfull ſaying*, and never the leſſe *worthy all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*, though it was (in effect, and for ſubſtance) the ſaying, and ſence of the devil, when he affirmed *Jeſus Chriſt* to be *the holy one of God*, *Mark* 1.24. But it is a common Papiſticall trick, to nick-name truths and opinions, which riſe up againſt the intereſts and honour

honour of the ſea of *Rome*, and to bethink themſelves of ſome heretike or other, who aſſerted them. And I wiſh that too many of thoſe who are called Proteſtants, and who as ambitiouſly as they, affect the name of Orthodox, did not too much *praiſe ſuch their ſayings*, by a frequent imitation of them.

In the mean time the excellencie of wiſdom in God is highly conſiderable, in framing and tempering a creature, ſo, which ſhall be indued with a ſufficiencie of ſtrength and power to beleeve, and yet this ſtrength and power notwithſtanding, never ſhall, never will beleeve, without a further ſupply from God; yea and this as certainly in the eye and knowledge of God, as if he had deprived him of, or denied unto him, all manner of ſtrength and power to beleeve. And yet we have an inſtance or example of this wiſdom in God, we ſpeak of, in the framing of the firſt *Adam*; and that by the generall confeſſion of all Divines, as well Proteſtants, as Papiſts; all concluding, that *Adam* received from the hand of his bountifull creatour a ſufficiencie of power, or ſpirituall ſtrength, whereby to have ſtood, and made good the poſſeſſion of his innocencie, againſt all aſſaults and temptations whatſoever, had he pleaſed to have improved the ſame accordingly; and yet that God did withall fore-ſee that he would fall, and that with as much certainty and infallibility of knowledge, as if there had been a neceſſity of his falling, and he inveſted with no poſſibility, or ſufficiencie of power, whereby to ſtand.

The third (and laſt) particular mentioned was, that if God meant to make ſure work of the ſalvation of men (as doubtleſſe he did) and withall to make earnings of glory to himſelf, in, or out of their ſalvation, it was ſimply neceſſary for him, to provide, not onely that men might be capable of thoſe terms, upon which he might with the ſafety, yea and with the advancement of his own glory, ſave them, but alſo that they might and ſhould, actually yield unto, and accept of them; yea and that with certainty, and infallibly, and yet without any inforcement, compulſion, or conſtraint, or otherwiſe, then by opening the eies of their mindes and underſtandings, to ſee,

apprehend, and conſider thoſe things, which ſhould effectually incline their hearts to yield up themſelves unto God in beleeving. Now that God, according to the tenour and current of the Goſpel, hath made ſuch a proviſion as this, cannot lightly be unknown unto thoſe, who are ſo much as competently acquainted therewith. When the Lord informed *Paul* by a viſion in the night that *he had much people in the city of Corinth*, his meaning (doubtleſſe) was, that he had many ſouls there, to whom he intended the grace of faith, and converſion, and that by the Miniſtry of *Paul*: yet *Pauls* way and method of converting ſouls to the faith, was none other, but by *opening their eyes, and turning them from darkneſſe unto light, and* [hereby] *from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts 26.18. 2 Cor.4.6. (to paſſe by other places without number of like import.) But into this point we may have opportunity otherwiſe further to inquire.

Thus we have found the third character or property we mentioned of an excellencie of wiſdom, fairly ſtamped upon the Goſpel; fully appearing in that deviſe, that glorious projection of God, to glorifie himſelf in the ſalvation and condemnation of men. There remains onely the fourth and the laſt character of this wiſdom, which we ſhall now briefly open unto you; and ſhew it you in the Goſpel alſo.

This character or property, we ſaid was a certain myſteriouſneſſe in the means, which ſhall at any time be levied and advanced for the bringing of ſome great end to paſſe: when the modell and whole projection thereof is of ſuch a nature and contrivance, that it doth not ſympathize with the ordinary projections of men; is of ſuch a ſtrain and carriage, that the reaſons and underſtandings of men, when they come to apprehend it, are ready to fall down before it, to admire, and adore the rarity of it; and to confeſſe and ſay concerning it, that according to the rate of their ſpeculations and workings, they ſhould never have come neer it; it lies a thouſand degrees beyond the line of all thoſe diſcoveries, which they had been ever like to make. Now that the means which the Goſpel holds forth, for the effecting of that great end (ſo oft named) is of this nature, myſterious in this ſence which hath been declared,

clared, is evident, and that in reſpect of ſundry particulars, and veins (as it were) of diſpenſation, running along in the body of it. We ſhall inſiſt only upon that, which is the very baſis or foundation of the whole work; the incarnation of the ſon of God. This is myſtery upon myſtery, and all is myſtery. *Who would ever have ſaid to Abraham* (ſaith *Sarah*) *that Sarah ſhould give children ſuck?* But how many thouſand degrees further, from all rationall expectation or belief was it, that the Son of God, who being *in the form of God*, *i.* actually known, acknowledged, worſhiped, and adored, as *God*: yea and *counted it no robbery* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *to be equall with God*, *i.* to claim an equality with God, being indeed *himſelf God bleſſed for ever*, ſhould become man; and that upon ſuch terms as he did? Who would ever have ſaid unto the world, that the Son of God ſhould become the ſon of man, and *dwell in a tabernacle of fleſh*, to give ſalvation to it? There are ſeverall things relating unto, and depending upon this incarnation of the Son of God, which are all myſterious (in the ſence declared) Firſt, that God ſhould have a Son, conſubſtantiall and coeſſentiall with him, and yet perſonally diſtinct from him, is a great myſtery it ſelf: *i.* is a concluſion or truth, which all the ſagacity and quickneſſe of all the reaſon and underſtanding of men under heaven, was not likely to have brought out of that darkneſſe, wherein it is hid, into the light; had it not been revealed, and that in viſions of the noone day, from heaven: yea, notwithſtanding that cleer and perfect revelation which is now made of it from heaven, yet how many thouſands have there been, and are at this day, not onely of Heathens and Infidels who reject the whole body of the Scriptures, but even of thoſe, who have ſubſcribed unto the truth of the Scriptures, as being from God (I ſay) many thouſands of theſe, yea many of them, men of great abilities, parts, and learning, have not acknowledged this for a truth, that God hath any ſuch Son as we ſpeak of, who is conſubſtantiall, with him; For denying him whom the Scriptures hold forth under this relation, *viz.* as being the naturall or conſubſtantiall Son of God, to be any ſuch ſon of his; they muſt needs be ſuppoſed to deny, the being of any ſuch ſonne at all; this being the main why they Gen 21.7.

deny *Jesus Christ* to be the Son of God (in any such sence) *viz.* because they cannot, or at least doe not, conceive, that there is any place or possibility for God to have any such Son. And this shews the truth, or conclusion we speak of, to be very mysterious; *viz.* that God hath a son coessentiall and consubstantiall to him.

2. That this Son of God (supposing his being) should come to be incarnate, or *made flesh* (as the Scripture expression is) is *without controversie* (as the Apostle saith) *a great mystery* also, *i.* such a dispensation, or transaction, as the thoughts of men, had they been all ingaged for a thousand years together, compassing heaven and earth with inquiries after truth, or probabilities of things, would in all likelyhood never have come neer, nor so much as look towards it: and that in regard of these two considerations. 1. The manner or strangenesse of the way, or means, how it should be done. 2. The strangenesse of the grace, or condescention in the Son of God to doe it, or to suffer it to be done.

1. The reason or thoughts of man would never have expected, or thought of the personall uniting of the Son of God, and the nature of man, in regard of the strangenesse of the way, or means how such an union as this should, and must be effected: as a man would never expect or think that the reasonable soul of a man should be personally united to the body of a pismire or flie, because the means how it should come to be thus united is very difficult to be conceived. The unlikelyhood of means, whereby any thing is to be brought to passe, and must be effected, if ever it takes place, is very apt, especially if it be great, and drawing neer to a supposed impossibility, to turn men aside, and take them off from all expectation, yea and thought, that ever the thing should be effected. What was the reason that made *Sarah* to conceive, and speak (as we heard, she did) *viz.* that no man *would ever have said unto Abraham* (*viz.* as being a thing no waies likely to come to passe) *that Sarah should give children suck in her old daies?* Doubtlesse her reason was, because she thought there was no probable means that any man would apprehend or think upon, how she should conceive, and bring forth children, after is had *ceased to be with her*

*after*

*after the manner of women.* So what was it, that turned the thoughts and expectations of that noble man aſide, on whoſe hand the King of *Iſrael* leaned, from the fulfilling, or taking place of what the Prophet *Eliſha* had prophecied, notwithſtanding he had the advantage of this Prophets word and prediction, to keep them to it; *viz.* that *by to morrow, a meaſure of fine flower ſhould be ſold for a ſhekel, and two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel in the gates of Samaria?* what was that (I ſay) that took off this noble man from all expectation or thinking that any ſuch thing would be? but onely that there was no means in his eye likely to bring it to paſſe, as is evident, *verſ.* 2. *Though the Lord* (ſaith he) *would make windows in the heavens, could this thing come to paſſe?* In like manner, if there had been nothing elſe in the way, to put the incarnation of the Son of God quite out of all the thoughts, and clean beſides all the expectations or imaginations of men, but onely the unlikelyhood of any proper means to effect it, this alone according to the common courſe of the actings and workings of the minds of men otherwiſe, had been enough to do it. a King 7 1. verſ. 2.

If you ask me, but what means needs there be for the effecting of the incarnation of the Son of God, or, the uniting the two natures, the divine, and the humane, into one perſon, but onely the will of God, acting in the potencie and power of it? And if ſo, this means might eaſily have been apprehended by men; and conſequently, the want of the knowledge of ſuch a means as you ſpeak of, can be no reaſon, why men might not probably have expected or thought of, this great act of the goodneſſe and power of God, the incarnation of his ſon. To this

I anſwer, It is true, the will and power of God, are cauſes ſufficient to bring any effect whatſoever to paſſe; ſo farre as efficiencie (properly ſo called) is able to produce an effect. But

1. Though they be ſufficient cauſes in reſpect of any effect whatſoever (with the limitation mentioned) yet they are not probable cauſes of any effect, ſave onely in conjunction and concurrence with ſuch ſecond cauſes, which are proper to produce the effect with them; or elſe of ſuch effects, as they

produce constantly, and without ceasing. As for example: the will and power of God are probable causes of the preservation and continuance of the universe, though in respect of these effects, they are in no conjunction with secondary causes, but perform them by themselves alone. But why are they probable or likely causes of these effects? not because of their potencie or sufficiencie to produce them; but because of their long accustomed and experienced imploiment in producing them: They have supported the creation in being for so many generations; therefore it's probable and likely they will doe so still. But in respect of contingent effects, and which are produced but now and then, though they be as sufficient causes of these effects as of those other, yet they are no probable causes of them, except they be joined with particular and proper causes, and which have a naturall tendencie to produce these effects also. As for example, the will and power of God, or, the powerfull will of God, is able to make a poor man, who to day *is destitute of daily food*, rich, and worth many thousands, before to morrow: but it is no probable cause of such an effect; it is ten thousand to one, that it will not effect it. The reason is, because such an effect as this is contingent, and there is no means or second cause in view likely to join with the powerfull will of God therein. Now the incarnation of the Sonne of God, was an effect of this kinde: it was contingent; yea and most rarely contingent; never any like to it, or neer to it, effected or brought forth, from the daies of eternity. Therefore the will of God, though it be granted to be a sufficient cause of it, yet was it no probable or likely cause of it; and therefore the knowledge of this cause in men, did no waies incline or accommodate them, to expect, or so much as to think of it: the eye of the reasons or understandings of men, were no waies like, ever to have fastened upon this cause, as likely to have produced the effect we speak of. Again,

2. Though the will and power of God be causes sufficient in respect of any effect whatsoever, as farre as efficiencie, properly so called, *i.* the vertue of that kinde of cause, which we call efficient, can possibly contribute towards the effect; yet they

they are not ſufficient without the concurrence and mediation of ſome other cauſe, or cauſes, in reſpect of ſuch effects, which ſtand in need of other cauſes beſides efficient cauſes, to produce, or give them being. For example, the will and power of God are cauſes abundantly ſufficient to make a man; but they are not ſufficient to make a man without a reaſonable ſoul; becauſe a reaſonable ſoul is an eſſentiall requiſite to the being of a man; and whatſoever God ſhould make without a reaſonable ſoul, is not that kinde of creature, which we call, man, whatever elſe it may be. The rule of the Schoolmen is moſt true, *Deus ipſe non poteſt ſupplere vicem cauſæ formalis:* God himſelf cannot ſupply the place or ſtead of the formall cauſe; he cannot make a wall white, without whiteneſſe, nor a man wiſe without wiſdom, nor learned, without learning, *&c.* It is true he is as able to produce theſe formall cauſes, as well as any other kinde of effect, and ſo to give a compleat being to things, as he pleaſeth: but he is not able to give a compleat being unto things, without producing that, which is ſimply neceſſary to make them compleat. Now then, be it granted, that men might very poſſibly apprehend the will and power of God to be ſufficient cauſes of producing ſuch an effect, as the incarnation of his ſon, as well as of any other poſſible effect whatſoever; yet there being other cauſes, or at leaſt another cauſe, as neceſſary to the actuall production of ſuch an effect as this (I mean, the making of the ſon of God, man, or, the ſon of man) as the will and power of God themſelves; and this cauſe, or cauſes, being no waies ſuch, as were ever like to enter into the heart or thoughts of men, evident it is, that this great effect we ſpeak of, the incarnation of the ſon of God, muſt needs be a myſtery to men, a thing which they were no waies likely to have thougt of, or to have expected, notwithſtanding they did, or might, apprehend the will and power of God ſufficient cauſes to produce as great and difficult matters, as this.

If you ask me, but what cauſe, or cauſes, were there further neceſſary or requiſite to the incarnation of the ſon of God beſides the will and power of God, which were ſo unlikely to have occurred in the way of the mindes and thoughts

thoughts of men, in all their travails and enquiries.

I anſwer, the two natures, the divine and the humane, being hypoſtatically or perſonally united in the Son of God being made fleſh, doe neceſſarily require ſome band or tie, or means of ſuch an union: and this band, cauſe, or means of the union we ſpeak of, is that further cauſe we mean, which is required to make the Sonne of God, man, beſides the power of God, and which we affirm to be a thing altogether unlikely to have ever been thought of by men. We ſaid before, that God himſelf could not ſupply the defect, or place of the formall cauſe of any thing, but muſt of neceſſity create or produce a formall cauſe in being, if he means to make the thing it ſelf: ſo in this caſe, intending to unite his own divine nature, and the nature of man in one and the ſame perſon, and to make one Chriſt of both, he muſt of neceſſity create, or make ſome band or other, by which the two natures, being in themſelves not only diſtinct, but infinitely diſproportioned the one unto the other, might become ſo intimately and intirely one, as an hypoſtaticall or perſonall union importeth. This, evidence of reaſon, yea allmoſt ſence it ſelf teacheth, that two things of different natures, or beings, cannot come to combine to make a third thing, which ſhall be intirely and perfectly one in it ſelf, and different from them both, but that firſt, there muſt be ſome efficient cauſe or other, ſo to unite and combine them together: and ſecondly, there muſt be alſo ſomewhat in the nature of a band common to them both, by which, 1. all two-neſſe (as it were) or plurality of beings between them, muſt be either diſolved, or prevented; and 2. ſuch a relation founded between them, whereby one muſt be looked upon as a part of the other, I mean, as a fellow part with it, and ſo both of them as together intirely conſtituting one and the ſame thing, or being. The bringing or putting of two things together ſimply, though it be with never ſo much neerneſſe of the one unto the other, doth not preſently make them one and the ſame thing, or one and the ſame being, doth not make one to be a part of the other; but there muſt be ſomewhat of another nature raiſed between them, which muſt give them another manner of a mutuall intireneſſe and relation, then any locall ſcituation or

neerneſſe

neerneſſe of place can doe. The body and ſoul in a living man, are truly and properly one, *i.* make one and the ſame perſon and being: but a ſpirit, good or bad, Angel, or devil, joining it ſelf with, or putting it ſelf into, whether a living, or dead body of a man, and acting out of it, or by it, as the ſoul it ſelf doth, as by ſpeaking, walking, or the like, doth not make one and the ſame perſon with that humane body, or perſon, which it thus acteth, or poſſeſſeth. The ſpirit in this caſe, is no fellow-part with that body, where to it is joined, but remains a diſtinct being by it ſelf, notwithſtanding any ſuch union as this. The reaſon of the difference is; becauſe there is a perſonall band, between the body and the ſoul in a living man; which there is not between a ſpirit, and the body or perſon of a man, notwithſtanding the one be poſſeſſed and acted by the other: In like manner, that the Son of God ſhould be incarnate or *made fleſh* (in the Scripture ſence) *i.* ſhould perſonally be united to the nature of man, ſo that one and the ſame perſon, who is called Chriſt, ſhould be the reſult, as it were, and product of both thus united; it was abſolutely neceſſary, not onely that he ſhould act, be eſſentially, preſent with, or in, and ſo ſhew his divine power, out of, this nature, but further, that a perſonall band ſhould intercede between him (I mean between his divine nature) and this humane nature aſſumed, which ſhould take hold of both; and raiſe another manner of relation between them for intireneſſe and oneneſſe of being, then is between him (or his divine nature) and all the holy men that ever were in the world; in many of whom notwithſtanding he acted, and ſhewed forth his divine power, by ſundry acts of the ſame nature with thoſe, which he acted in that very part of the humane nature, which he had perſonally aſſumed unto himſelf. Now then this is that which I ſay; that ſame perſonall band (as I call it) by the mediation whereof thoſe two natures, ſo infinitely diſtanced and differing the one from the other, the divine and the humane, became one perſon, and without which, it were, and had been ſimply unpoſſible that ever they ſhould have met, or combin'd in ſuch a way (I mean, to make one and the ſame perſon) is even now, the ὅτι of it (as they call it) being known, ſo myſterious, ſo difficult and

hard above measure to conceive what it is, or may probably be; that certainly, if there had not been a cleer revelation from heaven, that such a thing was in being, it would never have entred into the thoughts or mindes of men, either to have inquired into it, or to have expected it; least of all would they have been either able, or indeed desirous, to apprehend it. And thus you have the first consideration opened, in regard whereof, the incarnation of the sonne, was never likely to have come into the mindes or thoughts of men, had it not been revealed; *viz.* the exceeding difficulty or strangenesse of the manner, way, or means, how it should be effected and brought to passe.

2. The latter consideration was this; the strangenesse and incredibility of the grace or condescention in God, and in the Sonne of God, to yield unto it, and to effect it. It is true, the *Whole earth is full of the goodnesse of the Lord* (as the Psalmist speaks) *i.* of the fruits and expressions of his *goodnesse*; and men by consideration, and a diligent contemplation of the works of Providence and government of the world, may come to know much of the goodnesse, and bounty, of the patience and long-sufferance of God, and to make their souls fat herewith: yea for God to take *knowledge* of what we *stand in need of* (as our Saviour saith he doth) or (as *David* speaks) to *behold the things that are on earth*, is a great and gracious humility (as is there said) and condescention in so glorious a God, that hath his dwelling so high (as the Psalm expresseth it) and there are *none like unto him* amongst the great ones of the earth, those that are called Gods, in such condescentious expressions of themselves, as these, to those that are beneath them: they doe not consider, what, or how many, the wants, necessities, distresses, miseries, of poor creatures are, nor doe they ingage, or imploy themselves any waies to supply, or relieve them. But that humility, or condescention to the creature, which God sheweth in such aspects of his Providence, and in such a tenour of dispensations as these, belong unto him, as he is the governour of the world; and much in such a sence, *vengeance* is said to *belong unto him*. But that grace and condescention in God, and in his Sonne Jesus Christ, in his incarnation, in vouchsafing

Matth. 6. 32.
Psal. 113. 6.

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to assume the nature of man into the same person with him, especially upon those terms on which he did assume it, *viz.* with such poverty and contempt, with such, and so many sorrows and infirmities, with such bitter and reproachfull sufferings, *&c.* duly considered, is a condescention of another kinde, and strain, and measure, farre differing from the other; and that which was a thousand times lesse credible, or to have been expected from God, then the other. Now to make some kinde of estimate of the strangenesse and wonderfullnesse of this condescention, it will be necessary to take into consideration, to weigh and ponder these circumstances; 1. The sublimity, the transcendent excellencie of the divine nature. 2. The depth, I mean, the weaknesse and vilenesse of the humane nature. 3. The small incouragement he had by way of ingagement from that nature, to yield to such a condescention, as to be personally united to it. 4. The small incouragement he had from any hope of gain or benefit likely to accrue to himself, by such a condescention as this. 5. (Lastly) the great abasements which he knew he was further to undergoe and to abide in this nature assumed, over and besides the assumption it self of it. For the first, the supertranscendent excellencie and sublimity of the divine nature, is such, that it is an object, proportioned only unto, and comprehensible only by, it self. And as the beating back of the eye by the sun with a kinde of indignation and disdain to be (directly) beheld or looked upon by it, argueth a marveilous strength and fulnesse of light in it; so doth that constant sending-empty-away of the reasons and understandings of men by God, when they come to fasten, and feed upon the contemplation of his essence and being, abundantly argue and prove, a strength, fulnesse, glory, and perfection of being in him, which disdaineth all proportion, or commensurableness, with any creature whatsoever, yea with all of them put together. 2. For the weaknesse and vilenesse of the humane nature, especially since infested and embased by sinne, *quot homines, tot testes*; there are as many witnesses, what, and how great it is, as there are men. And though the Son of God did not assume it with any defilement or embasement of sinne; yet (as the Scripture saith) *God sent his Son in the similitude* Rom. 8. 3.

*or likeneſſe of ſinfull fleſh*; *i.* in ſuch fleſh, in that fleſh, which to the eye, and in outward appearance, differed nothing from that, which was ſinfull indeed (no, the ſinfulneſſe of it it ſelf, not excepted) yea which was charged with all thoſe naturall weakneſſes and infirmities, which that fleſh, which is really ſinnefull, is univerſally expoſed, and ſubject unto. 3. He was ſo farre from being under any ingagement whatſoever, to that nature, which with ſuch an infinite condeſcention, he did aſſume (I mean, unto men) that as farre as evil intreaties, injuries, provocations in the higheſt, could interpoſe and prevail with him, he was likely to have ſtood ingaged and bent in his reſolutions and deſires, upon the ruine and deſtruction of it. 4. Nor could he expect, being truly and ſubſtantially God, that any matter of gain, advantage, or addition of good in what kinde ſoever, ſhould, or could accrue unto him, by ſuch a condeſcention; that which is infinite, can have nothing, either added to it, or taken from it. 5. (And laſtly) nor could he but know, even before he put on, and ware that garment, or cloathing of fleſh, which we ſpeak of, how it would be rent and torn, and a thouſand waies abuſed, before he ſhould come to put it off again. Theſe circumſtances (with ſome others of like conſideration, which might be added to them) duly conſidered, muſt needs render the condeſcention of the Sonne of God, in his incarnation, hyperbolically ſtrange, wonderfull, and myſterious.

Thus have we at laſt fully and cleerly demonſtrated unto you (though in ſomewhat a more generall way, and in the main carriages of it only) that tranſcendent excellency of divine wiſdom, which ſhines in the Goſpel; & which we laid down in the eighth place, amongſt our arguments or conſiderations of the ſecond ſort, to prove the Scriptures, and ſo the Goſpel, to be from God. As for all the particularities of this wiſdom we ſpeak of, they are like *the ſtarres in the firmament of heaven* for their multitude, which no man can number, or call by their names, but only he that made them. Let us now (in a word) weigh and conſider attentively, what there is in the conſideration argued, to demonſtrate, or prove the Goſpel to be from God. *With him* (ſaith *Job*, ſpeaking of God) *is wiſedom and ſtrength: he hath*

Iob 12.13.

*counſell*

*counſell and underſtanding.* So *Daniel, Wiſdom and ſtrength are his.* And the Apoſtle *Paul, To God* (ſaith he) *onely Wiſe, be praiſe, through Jeſus Chriſt for ever:* Where he ſeems to make wiſdom an incommunicable property in God. *To God onely wiſe; i.* who onely, or who alone, is wiſe. Amongſt the Heathen, *Pythagoras* an ancient Philoſopher, and who was the firſt that gave the name of *Philoſophers* to men ſtudious of knowledge (a word which ſignifies lovers of wiſdom, whereas before ſuch men were called, σοφοι wiſe;) gave this reaſon, why he contented himſelf with the name of a Philoſopher, or lover of wiſdom, and thought it was a term high enough for men; becauſe he judged no man wiſe, but God only. So that wiſdom, properly ſo called, was by the light of nature it ſelf, adjudged a perfect diſtinguiſhing character between God and man, or, of God, from man. *David* findes this character of God in the frame and making of the heavens. *To him Who by wiſdom made the heavens:* and ſo again in the whole courſe and tenour of his Providence: *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works: in wiſdom haſt thou made them all. Solomon* alſo, the wiſeſt amongſt men, takes notice, not ſo much of the power or omnipotencie of God, as of his wiſdom, in laying the foundations of the earth, and ſtabliſhing the heavens. *The Lord by wiſdom hath laid the foundations of the earth, by underſtanding hath he eſtabliſhed the heavens.* So that a choiceneſſe or excellencie of wiſdom found in any thing, hath ſtill been acknowleged and looked upon, by the wiſeſt and moſt conſiderate of men, as a cleer impreſſion of God, and hath been a ſufficient ground unto them to conclude ſuch things to be from God, or of his doing, wherein it hath been found. Now he that ſhall diligently contemplate and behold that face of wiſdom, which hath been preſented unto you in the glaſſe of the Goſpel, will eaſily perceive that the beauty and luſtre of it is more ſublime, raviſhing, and God-like, then is any where to be found in all, or all manner of the works of God beſides. So that well might the Apoſtle call Chriſt, as he is contrived in the Goſpel, or the doctrine of *Chriſt* (as the word oft ſignifieth) *the wiſdom of God. But unto you that are called* (ſaith he) *both of Jews and Grecians, We preach Chriſt, the power of God, and the*

Dan. 2 20.

Rom. 16. 27.

Pſal. 136. 5.

Pſal. 104 24.

Prov. 3. 19.

1 Cor. 1. 24.

*wiſdom of God*: we preach Chriſt, *i.* the doctrine of Chriſts Goſpel, which is *the wiſdom of God*, *i.* a piece of admirable and divine wiſdom, worthy of God, or, wherein God himſelf is cleerly to be ſeen. And to this purpoſe the ſame Apoſtle in the latter Epiſtle to theſe *Corinthians*, chap. 4. verſ. 3, 4. hath this paſſage. *If our Goſpel then be hid, it is hid to them* (or amongſt them) *that are loſt*, or (τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις) that are in a way of being loſt, that are in the looſing, or ready to periſh, or to be loſt; meaning, that it is *hid*, *i.* the truth of it, or, the deſcent of it from God, undiſcerned and unacknowledged, onely amongſt, or unto, ſuch: The reaſon whereof he gives in the next verſe, thus: *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of thoſe who beleeve not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them*; cleerly implying, that there is ſuch a glorious light or luſtre in the Goſpel (which muſt needs be in reſpect of the wiſdom thereof, at leaſt principally, in reſpect of this: becauſe this is that which as *Solomon* ſaith, makes a *mans face to ſhine*) ſuch a glorious luſtre (I ſay) or brightneſſe of wiſdom the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth to be in the Goſpel, that except *the God of this world*, *i.* the devil (whom our Saviour in *John* calls the Prince of this world) had through the juſt judgement and permiſſion of God, *bewitched men* (as the Apoſtles phraſe is elſewhere) or *blinded their eyes* (as here he ſaith) *i.* made them uncapable and in-apprehenſive of things otherwiſe notoriouſly, yea and glorioufly, manifeſt, they could not but ſee and diſcern it plainly. Where 1. (by the way) we have that objection againſt the point now aſſerted, fully anſwered and cleered; *viz.* that if there were ſuch an excellent luſtre or brightneſſe of wiſdom in the Goſpel, why ſhould not the wiſe and prudent, the rationall and underſtanding men of the world, come to ſee and imbrace it, rather then others? yes (ſaith the Apoſtle) there is a cleer reaſon for this; *the God of this world*, the devil more generally practiſeth more upon ſuch men as theſe, then upon others; and that through the juſt judgement of God; becauſe ſuch as theſe (commonly) are proud and high conceited of themſelves and their own wiſdoms, or otherwiſe wickedly given; and ſo in reſpect of their knowledge or naturall indow-

2 Cor. 4 verſe 3, 4.

Eccleſ. 8. 1.

ments

ments they are more expoſed to the ſtroke of Gods diſpleaſure, and conſequently to the devils *blinding of their eyes*, then other men. Now as the common ſaying is, that *corruptio optimi eſt peſſima*, the corruption of the beſt, is worſt; ſo when men of great parts and indowments are ſpiritually blaſted and *blinded* by Satan, they become more froward and perverſe in their reaſonings and motions about ſpirituall things, then others; and more averſe then any men, as to any regular and unpartiall dijudication of ſuch things, which in themſelves are proper and ſufficient to convince them of the truth and certainty of the Goſpel. And

2. That is obſervable alſo from the laſt recited paſſage of the Apoſtle, that where the devil hath not had to doe with the mindes and underſtandings of men, where men and women have not ſo farre provoked God, as to cauſe him to deliver them over to the effectuall working of Satan, there they are in a capacity to cloſe with the Goſpel as a doctrine of truth, and from God. *Our Goſpel* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *if it be hid, it is hid to thoſe that are loſt*: and who are theſe? ſuch whoſe eyes, *i.* the eyes of whoſe mindes, are *blinded by Satan*, leſt *the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God ſhould ſhine unto them*: cleerly implying, that it is not mens being in their naturall conditions, but in their hardened, or further blinded condition, that utterly diſables them from ſubmitting to the Goſpel by faith. If ſo be that men naturally, and before the committing of ſuch ſins, for which God gives them up unto Satan, *to blinde their eyes*, were in an utter incapacity of beleeving, the not-*ſhining of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt* in their eyes, could not reaſonably be attributed to *Satans blinding* of them. If men be born blinde, their blindneſſe, or non-ſeeing of things, cannot be aſcribed to any accident that ſhall befall them afterwards. But this only by the way: and that in reference to ſomewhat lately delivered, and for the ſtrengthening and confirmation thereof: otherwiſe there are many other things, obſervable in the verſe. But (as to the buſineſſe in hand) you cleerly ſee, that either the holy Ghoſt himſelf, or whoſoever it was, that framed the Epiſtle, wherein the paſſage late mentioned ſtands, judgeth that excellent *light*

of

of wiſdom, which *ſhines* from the face of the Goſpel, to be an evident and undeniable character of the royall parentage and deſcent of it from God. Let all the books, and moſt accurate writings of men, be drawn together, thoſe that are of greateſt obſervation and name, let them bring forth and ſhew all their treaſures of wiſdom and underſtanding; the Goſpel will, or at leaſt well may, be as cleerly diſtinguiſhed and known from all the reſt, by thoſe heights and depths of wiſdom that are here, as the heavens are from the earth by their height, and the ſea being fadomed where it is deepeſt, from the flatts and ſhallows of ſmaller rivers: yea the ſun is not more eaſily diſcerned from the ſtarres of the night by that ſuperabundant exceſſe of light which he carries about him, then the Goſpel may be from all humane writings whatſoever, by that predominancie of wiſdom and underſtanding, which is ſeen in it above them all. *The gleanings of the grapes* of the wiſdom of the Goſpel, are better then the *whole vintage* of all other writings. The Apoſtle having mentioned onely that one particular of the Goſpel, the *crucifying of the Lord of glory*, comments upon it thus: *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; it may well be further added; no nor any other thing like unto theſe. Never was there any ſuch ſtrain of wiſdom heard of as this: ſo to qualifie and allay the divine nature, as to make it capable of dying; to put on *mortality* upon him that was *immortall*, that ſo that which was *mortall* might come to *put on immortality*, and wear it for ever. All the ſubtile ſtratagems, and wiſe projections, and profound policies of men, that are read or heard of from any other hand whatſoever, are but like devices how to catch flies, or to make bubbles in the aire, ſuch as little children uſe to ſport withall, in compariſon of that unfadomable, incomprehenſible deſigne, by which God hath projected, not the ſaving onely, but the glorifying alſo of a loſt world. This for this eighth demonſtration.

1 Cor. 2 9.

The ninth argument ariſing from the matter of the Scriptures, to evince their derivation from God, formerly propounded, was the great and wonderfull myſteriouſneſſe of the

Evangelical

Evangelicall tranſaction, delivered and laid forth in them. Of this myſteriouſneſſe of the Goſpel, and of the many contrivements whereof it conſiſts, we ſpake ſomewhat largely in the former argument, and therefore ſhall adde little or nothing of it here. When we affirm the great Evangelicall tranſaction, by which God hath plotted, and brought about the ſalvation of the world, to be myſterious, we mean onely this (as was formerly touched) that it was a projection, contrivement, or deviſe, which was as farre from any way, or path ever occupied or walked in, by the reaſons, underſtandings, or imaginations of men, as the eaſt is from the weſt, or the heavens from the earth, and which was altogether unlikely ever to have come up into the mindes and thoughts of men. Now how, and upon what grounds and conſiderations, and wherein, this myſteriouſneſſe of it appeareth, was argued at large in the foregoing point. Let us only (in a word) weigh the conſideration of this myſteriouſneſſe we ſpeak of, and ſee what ſtrength there is in it, to prove the Goſpel it ſelf to come from God. *That which is born of the fleſh* (ſaith our Saviour) *is fleſh: and that which is born of the ſpirit, is ſpirit:* meaning, that each of theſe births, anſwers their originall, in nature, properties, inclinations, diſpoſitions, *&c.* In like manner, whatſoever proceeds from man, ſuppoſe in a way of reaſoning, diſcurſive invention, contrivement, or the like, doth but anſwer the genius, or that line of reaſon, wiſdom and underſtanding which is humane, and that which is, or very poſſibly may be, found in other men. It is true, the ſphere wherein ſome mens apprehenſions and underſtandings move, and work, is much larger, and more comprehenſive, then other mens; ſome by reaſon of the vigour, ſtrength, and activeneſſe of their reaſons and underſtandings, are able to travail further in inquiries after truth, then others, and to make diſcoveries of things, that lie at a farre greater diſtance, then they: ſome mens capacities and wits are only made and ſerve them to travail their native countrey and places neer home, being capable onely of things neer at hand, and which all men generally know, or may know with eaſe: others, are made for long voyages, with abilities and inclinations to coaſt *terra incognita*, unknown countries, Joh. 3 6.

and to make discoveries and reports of things there. But as it was in the Israelites gathering of *Manna, he that gathered least, had no want; and he that gathered most had no overplus:* so in the case we speak of; as the workings, contrivements, and debates of the meanest, and most ordinary understandings of men, want not altogether the savour of that which is common to men (I mean, reason) they have some taste, more or lesse, of what is proper to men: so neither have the theories, contemplations, and atchievements of the richest and most sublime understandings of men, any overplus (I mean, any thing more excellent) then what is humane, and what upon a due search into, and consideration had of it, may be cleerly known to be but from men. Therefore, when any such piece of wisdom, or projection of a businesse, shall be presented to us, wherein upon diligent inquiry made, there plainly appears *aliquid augustius*, that which is more adorable, mysterious, and divine, then what is any waies likely, yea or indeed possible, to fall within the compasse of the largest sphere of the understanding of men, as to the contrivement of it; there is a sure foundation to conclude and build upon, that doubtlesse a greater wisdom then any that is humane, was interessed in the framing and composure of it. Now that the Gospel, or that great Gospel transaction (as I called it) is of that consideration we speak of, a piece of wisdom, a projection, which carries a fuller and more majestique lustre of wisdom in the face of it, then ever was known to appear, or is any waies likely to appear in any doctrine, project, or devise of man, hath been sufficiently argued, and made good in what hath been already said. I shall onely adde, the consideration of those words, *Who is the image of God*, in that passage of Scripture lately cited (and in part opened) 2 *Cor.*4.3,4. *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of those that believe not, least the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Who is the image of God*: It is, as if he should say, it is scarce possible, but that men should see and acknowledge, the truth of the Gospel, and the descent of it from God (as we the Apostles preach it) if Satan did not marvellously *blinde their mindes*, and so make them very uncapable of such things; inasmuch

inasmuch as the *Gospel*, is *the glorious Gospel of Christ*, i. displaies and sets forth *Christ* gloriously, and like unto himself; and *Christ* is *the image of God*; i. a person, in whom, the nature, and being of God, and all his attributes, wisdom, grace, holinesse, justice, power, are cleerly to be seen, as farre as they are discernable by men; which is farre enough, to inable men to put a cleer difference, between him and his image, and likenesse, and between any created being whatsoever, and the likenesse thereof. So that if men were not under the power of *Satan*, and justly delivered up by God unto him to make fools and sots of, in respect of the great things of their peace, they could not but see the very compleat image and likenesse of God himself in the Gospel, as being that which is most manifest, and most plainly and palpably discernable, from the similitudes or likenesses of all creatures whatsoever; and consequently subject themselves in faith and obedience to it. Great mountains when they are before us, are easily discerned from little moul-hills, or from pins heads; if men have but any tolerable use of their eyes. So (saith the Apostle, in effect) is the image and likenesse of God, when it is presented before men, as it is in the Gospel (where *Christ* is gloriously presented) easie enough to be distinguished and known, from the superscription or likenesse of any other being whatsoever, if men be not either smitten with spirituall *blindnesse* by the hand of Satan, or willingly shut their eyes against it. Where the sight is but weak and dimme, yet if the object be full of visibility, and very easie to be discerned, it is able to apprehend it; if a man hath but a glimmering of a seeing faculty, he will be able to discern an house from a man, or from a tree, neer at hand; so though mens reasons and understandings be naturally slow, and dark, and dimme, *&c.* yet such an object as God is, so full of intelligility, or of that which may be apprehended and understood, being in a cleer glasse proposed and brought neer to them, certainly may be discerned by them, and known from other objects, if the *God of this world* hath not breathed upon them, and blasted them. Indeed if *Christ* were only the *image* of some creature, as of a man, or an Angel, and *not of God*; the Apostle seems to suppose, that though he

were presented in the Gospel to the utmost line and lineament of his beauty and perfection, yet the *light of the Gospel might not have shined unto them*, though Satan had *not blinded their mindes*: because such an object as this, would have had but *parum de ratione formali*, little of that in it, which makes an object intelligible, and apt to be distinguished from other things, by the understanding; all created beings being empty of entity or being, and consequently of intelligibility, comparatively in respect of God. But now, Christ being *the image of God*, who contains all perfection and fulnesse of entity and being, and consequently of whatsoever is intelligible and that may be apprehended and understood; and withall, being so excellently and fully set forth, as he is in the Gospel; if men doe not see the light of truth in it, and that it is from God, it is a certain signe, either that *that evil one* (as *John* calls him) hath *touched them* in the *eyes of their understandings*, and made them blinde; or else that they wilfully shut their eyes against the light of it, and do not see it, meerly because they will not, or care not to doe it. And so the same Apostle writing to the
Gal 3 1. *Galatians*, asks them, who *had bewitched them*, *i.* hindered and bound, as it were, their reasons, judgements, understandings, that they *should not beleeve the truth* [of the Gospel] cleerly implying, that if some such strange thing, as a spirituall *bewitching* be not fallen upon men, if they be but free, and have their reasons and understandings at liberty, to act that which is proper for them to doe, they cannot lightly but acknowledge, and submit unto the Gospel, as a truth. If you ask me, why so? the Apostle himself answers you in the case of the *Galatians* (in the place mentioned) where he gives this reason why they must needs be *bewitched*, in that they did not *obey the truth* of the Gospel; *viz.* that Christ had *been plainly described unto them*: *before whose eyes* (saith he) *Christ hath been evidently set forth*, [delineated, or described, as the word signifieth] *crucified among you*. Whereby he plainly insinuates, that the image or portracture of Christ, being so drawn to the life, as it is in the Gospel, by the hand of the holy Ghost, (especially) if it be but well and cleerly shewed, and presented unto men in the ministry thereof: is such an

object,

object, or image, which is sufficiently convincing of its own verity and conformity, 1. to the person of Christ; 2. to the nature of God, where the eyes of mens reasons and understandings have not been shut up, or at least dazled and made unserviceable for such a purpose, by the devil. If the truth of the Gospel were such, or so conditioned, that men by nature, I mean, before they receive any secret and penal stroke upon the eyes of their mindes from the devils hand, were no waies capable of it, and of consenting to it; the Apostle would never have asked the *Galatians*, who *had bewitched them*, that *they did not obey it*. But this by the way. As to our businesse in hand; this is that which I desire you will take speciall notice of upon occasion of the former passage of Scripture (the interpretation whereof given, hath been cleered and strengthened by this latter) that the great and profound mysteriousnesse of that blessed transaction in the Gospel, wherein the salvation of the world works with so high an hand, is one of the faireſt and most discernable lineaments of the image of God that is to be seen there; and consequently is very pregnant and demonstrative, to evince the Gospel to be from God.

The tenth (and last) argument from the matter of the Scriptures, that was proposed to satisfie the soul and conscience about their originall, and to prove that they are from God, was this: the glorious, and most transcendent importance of this transaction of the Gospel, by way of benefit and blessing upon the world. Amongst many others, there are these eight great benefits and blessings, which the Gospel is set, and seeks to bring upon the world; yea and which it actually brings upon the heads of all those, who unfainedly desire, and seek after them. The first, is our reconciliation with God, or unto God. Secondly, our justification, or righteous-making in the sight of God. Thirdly, our adoption, or sonship unto God. Fourthly, the mortification of the body of sin and death in men. Fiftly, the quickning unto, or the inspiration of, a new life, to live holily, and unto God. Sixtly, peace of conscience, with God, or towards God. Seventhly, our redemption or deliverance from the wrath and vengeance which is to come. Eightly,

(and lastly) the bringing of us to glory; or the investing of us with a glorious and blessed eternity. It is well known to us, that the face of the Gospel is fully set to possesse the world of all this treasure; to invest the sons and daughters of men, with all these blessed priviledges (besides many others.) And because this is a thing so generally known, we shall onely touch the particulars, and that very lightly.

1. Our reconciliation with God, or unto God; *i.* the slaying, or taking away that enmity against God, and those hard thoughts of him, which before lay burning, and working in our hearts and inward parts, together with the kindling of a spirit of love towards him, and the raising of a good and honourable opinion in us concerning him, in the stead thereof, is fully expressed, and asserted, 2 *Cor.*5.18,19. *Rom.*5.10. *Colos.* 1.21, *&c.*

2 Cor.5 18, 19. Rom.5.10 Col.1.21.

2. Our justification, or righteous-making in the sight of God; *i.* the rendring or setting of us free from all guilt, demerit and imputation of sinne whatsoever, and that in a way of the greatest equity and righteousnesse, without the least reflexion upon his most district justice, perfect hatred, and deepest severity against sinne, is cleerly testified in these, and many other passages of Scripture, *Act.*13.38,39. *Rom.*3.21,22,*&c. Rom.* 5.9, *&c.*

Acts 13 38,39. Rom.3.21,22, &c. Rom 5.9.

3. Our adoption, or relation of sonship unto God by faith, is with no lesse evidence and freqnencie of assertion held forth in the Scripture. Let these texts, with many others of like notion, be perused for satisfaction herein, *Joh.*1.12,13. *Rom.*8.14, 15. *Gal* 3.26. *Gal.*4.5,6,7, *&c.*

Gal.3.26. Gal.4.5,6,7.

4. The mortification of *that body of sinne and death* (as the Apostle calls it) which is in us, is a glorious priviledge, benefit, and blessing, which we receive by the Gospel. The Gospel ministreth unto us wisdom and strength wherewith to doe it, yea wherewith to make us willing to doe it, The two great Apostles, *Paul* and *Peter*, give knowledge of this Evangelicall blessednes also. The former, *Rom.*6.3,4,5. and again, *Col.*3.3,5. The latter, 1 *Pet.*4.1, *&c.*

Rom. 6.3,4,5, &c. Col 3.3,5. 1 Pet.4.1.

5. A vivification, or quickning unto a new and more excellent life; an inspiration of a new principle of vitall motions

and

and actions, farre more honourable and auguſt, then our former, is a Goſpel benediction alſo unto, and upon, the world. This grace is viſible in theſe Scriptures (with their fellows) *Rom* 6.4. *Jam.*1.18. *Eph.*2.1.5, *&c.*

Eph.2.5, James 1.18. Rom.6.4.

6. Peace with God, or peace of conſcience with God, or towards God, is another great bleſſing that accrues unto the world by the Goſpel; and depends upon, and flows from that other priviledge and bleſſing we ſpake of, our juſtification. Let that great oracle of divine knowledge (the Apoſtle *Paul* I mean) be conſulted about this, *Rom.*5.1. *Therefore* (ſaith he) *being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The meaning is not only, that God is at peace with us, in himſelf, and intends no acts of hoſtility againſt us, we being fully acquitted and diſcharged from all matter of offence, which might juſtly provoke him hereunto; but further that *we have this peace with him*, *i.* we injoy, or may injoy this intereſt of peace with God; we have ſufficient ground of injoiment of it in our juſtification. *Fear* (we know) *hath torment* (as *John* ſaith) whether there be any cauſe of fear or no: and they that fear trouble, or warre from any, cannot properly be ſaid to have peace with them, though nothing but peace be intended towards them. See yet more of this, *Act.*10.36. *Rom.*10,15. *Eph.*2.17, *&c.*

Rom.5.1. Acts 10.36. Rom.10.15. Eph.2.17.

7. Redemption, and deliverance from the *wrath* and *vengeance which is to come*, is a priviledge or bleſſing, without which moſt miſerable were the condition of thoſe that are called happy (yea, even the firſt-born of this denomination) in this world. But for this great bleſſing alſo on the worlds behalf, ſee whether the Goſpel undertakes not, in theſe and other-like places, 1 *Cor.*1.30. *Epheſ.*1.7. *Coloſ.*1.14. 1 *Theſ.* 1.10.

1 Theſ.1.10. Eph.1.7. Col.1.14. 1 Cor.1.30.

8. (And laſtly) the Goſpel alſo, doth not only raiſe and lift up the world, with the hope and expectation of a redemption or deliverance *from the wrath which is to come:* but of an inveſtiture and poſſeſſion alſo of the glory which is to come: yea it carrieth on thoſe who beleeve, ſo farre in the waies of righteouſneſſe and of peace, untill they be ready to enter into the city of the great King: *it maketh us meet* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh)

ſpeaketh) *to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light* (Col.1.12.) *yea and is able to give us an inheritance amongſt thoſe that are ſanctified*, Act.20.32.

Col 1 12.
Act 20 32.

Now then theſe being the known benefits wherewith the Goſpel undertakes to bleſſe (yea and wherewith it really doth bleſſe) the world, ſome of them actually, yea and ſenſibly injoyed by the Saints, as *the mortification of that body of death* which we ſpeak of, the dying of the old man within them, the quickning and raiſing up of the new, that peace of conſcience, which they injoy with God, *&c.* let us briefly conſider, whether, I doe not ſay the actuall collation of theſe things upon men, or the grounds and reaſons upon which this Goſpel undertakes to ſecure men of the reall injoyment of them all in due time: but whether the very treaty with men about ſuch things as theſe, being ſo ſpirituall, and holy, and of that high and glorious concernment unto the world, is not a rich and pregnant demonſtration, that the Goſpel is from God. As one of thoſe that were in the high Prieſts Hall, with *Peter*, diſcovered him by his ſpeech or language, to be none belonging to the high Prieſt or his family, nor of thoſe that came againſt his Maſter, but to belong unto *Chriſt*, and challenged him upon it; *ſurely alſo thou art one of them; for thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee:* in like manner, the very nature and ſubject of the diſcourſe of the Scriptures; eſpecially upon, and about the ſubjects mentioned, cleerly diſcover them, to be none of the writings of the wiſdom or learning of this world; becauſe there is not a *lip* of ſuch *excellencie*, not a pen that ever advanced ſuch a magnificent and ſublime diſcourſe, that ever ſo much as faced the world, no not with the leaſt mention or overture of things ſo ſuper-tranſcendently rich and glorious, to be found amongſt all the ſcribes, or wiſe-men, of this ſchool and order. And as the Lord Chriſt gave this account to the diſciples of *John*, who were ſent unto him, to inquire whether he was the *Meſſiah*, or no, to prove himſelf to be the *Meſſiah* indeed: *The blinde receive their ſight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raiſed up, and the poor receive the Goſpel*; meaning, that theſe great and wonderfull cures, and bleſſings, ſo abundantly wrought, and given unto men by him, were a great

Mat.26.73.

Matth.11.5.

great argument that he was the *Messiah* indeed, the great benefactour of the world; in like manner, when we hear of the enemies of God reconciled to him, of sinners justified, of aliens and strangers adopted for sons and daughters unto God; of sinne and corruption mortified, where sometime they were alive; of men quickned, and made alive unto righteousnesse, who before were *dead in sinnes and trespasses*; of men redeemed, who were the worst and most miserable of bond-men and vassalls; of men glorified, and made like unto the Angels, who were the children of shame, vilenesse, and contempt; I say when we hear of all these great and marveilous things, partly already brought to passe, partly undertaken, and this, with all possibly-imaginable likelihood to be brought to passe, in the times and seasons assigned hereunto, by a piece of wisdom or learning; may we not without any fear or doubting conclude, that certainly this wisdom, this learning, which advanceth the blessednesse of the world to this height, is not from men, but from God? For what greater things then these can God himself, if he should ingage himself with all his divine wisdom it self, though it be infinite, what greater things then these can he project, or by his power bring to passe for the sonnes and daughters of men? This for our tenth and last demonstration, taken from the substance, or subject matter of the Scriptures.

We have now finished our first kinde of arguments, or demonstrations, to evince the divine origiuall of the Scriptures, which were such, as we called intrinsecall, and are found in the Gospel it self; which we subdivided again, or differenced under two heads; some of them were taken from the manner; the other, from the matter of the Scriptures. We now proceed to the second generall head, or kinde of argument, to demonstrate the same truth (I mean that the Scriptures are from God) these we formerly called extrinsecall, because they are the considerations of such things, which doe not inhere in the Scriptures, nor properly result from them; but yet they face them, and relate to them with such a kinde of relation, which takes hold of the divinity of them, as the former did, and demonstrates the same parentage, and descent of them,

with those other. The particulars of this kinde of argument, or consideration also, which we call extrinsecall, may be ranged under two subordinate heads likewise. The former are such passages or acts of providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and from him: the latter, are such, either doings, or sayings of men, which are so farre confederate with those providences of God, as to join in testimony with them on the behalf of the Scriptures.

For the former of these; those great actings, and workings of providence, which relate unto the Scriptures, by way of testimony, that they are from God, are chiefly five. 1. The wonderfull preservation of the Scriptures: 2. the manner of the plantation of the Gospel when it first went forth into the world, with the strange successe which attended it: 3. the exact and punctuall fulfilling of the predictions contained in the Scriptures, in their season: 4. The great and wonderfull effects, which God hath formerly, and continues still daily to produce and work by the Gospel, and ministry of it: 5. (And lastly) the government of the world, carried on and managed with such a sweet conformity to the Scriptures, and according to the tenour of the Gospel, and the high things thereof. To which you may adde (if you please) the remarkable judgements, that have been executed and inflicted upon their chief enemies.

For the first of these; that great hand of providence which hath appeared in preserving of the body, or books of the Scriptures, for so many generations together, as have passed over them, since the first writing of them, in the midst of so many dangers, and against so many indeavours to root them out of the world, is a great argument that they belong unto God, as the authour and parent of them. It is a common saying in naturall Philosophy. *Eadem est causa procreans & conservans.* The procreating, and preserving, cause of things, is one and the same. And as the Scripture seems to make that dispensation of God towards *Christ*, his not *suffering him to see corruption*, though he were in the grave, and so (as it were) in the very hand and power of corruption; an argument that he was his son, his *holy one*; *thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to*

Act. 2. 27.

see

*ſee corruption*; ſo is that hand of protection and preſervation, which God for ſo many years (or rather ages) together hath conſtantly held over the Scriptures, not ſuffering them *to ſee corruption* in one kinde or other, when as the world, and the enemies thereof, who ſought their corruption and deſtruction, ſeem to have had them under their power, and that they might have done to them, as *Chriſt* ſaid they did unto *John* the Baptiſt, *even what they liſt*; that God (I ſay) hath all this while preſerved the Scriptures in the midſt of ſo many dangers, and likelyhoods of miſcarrying, is a very ſtrong preſumption (at leaſt) that they have ſome peculiar intereſt in him, and are *holy* unto him with a more endeared *holineſſe*, then other writings.

There are three kindes of corruption, or periſhings, whereunto books and writings are obnoxious; and ſo the *Scriptures* themſelves alſo, ſo farre as they partake in the nature and infirmities of other writings. The one is, by an utter loſſe or periſhing of all, and every part and parcell of the writing; when there is not ſo much as a fragment, fragments, or broken piece remaining. The ſecond is, when they are much diſmembred and maimed, ſo that the beauty and comelineſſe of their ſtructure and frame is wholly defaced, and ſome, or more, of the more conſiderable and principall things at firſt contained in them, wholly loſt, or periſhed from the world. The third and laſt kinde of periſhing is, when their body or bulk is not diminiſhed, nay perhaps this may be augmented; but the ſpirit and life of that knowledge, or of thoſe truths, which were at firſt plainly and cleerly held forth in them, is much infeebled, if not quite diſſolved and deſtroyed, by falſifications, additions, ſubſtractions, and alterations in one kinde or other. Now from all theſe kindes of corruptions or periſhings, God hath, if not by way of perfect miracle, yet by a very high and remarkable hand of providence, preſerved the Scriptures: and ſhall we not then think that they are his?

1. It is a matter of marveilous conſideration, if we look downwards, and towards the earth only (I mean, only upon ſecond cauſes) that the whole body of the Scriptures, ruſh and branch, they and their memoriall with them, are not long be-

fore this periſhed from under the heavens: conſidering, 1. what numbers of enemies they have alwaies had, who have ſought their extirpation and ruine: 2. with how perfect and unplacable an hatred, theſe (at leaſt many of them) have ſought their ſuppreſſion: 3. how potent many of their enemies have been, furniſhed with power in abundance (in the eye of reaſon) to wreck their hatred upon them in this kinde: 4. what opportunities they have had, and advantages, in conjunction with their power: 5. (and laſtly) what hath been attempted by ſome of them in this kind. Theſe circumſtances taken into conſideration, render the providence of God little leſſe then miraculous, in the preſervation of them to this day; eſpecially without any maim, or loſſe of limb (as it were) yea or corruption or falſification in any part of them (as we ſhall adde in the other particulars) but let us (for diſpatch ſake) run over the particulars mentioned very briefly; which otherwiſe might be much enlarged from hiſtory.

1. I ſay the Scriptures, and the doctrine conteined in them, have very many enemies; as 1. all the devils in hell: and 2. all wicked, ungodly, and prophane perſons on the earth. Firſt, all the devils in hell, yea and out of hell (if they be not in hell, whilſt they are in the aire, and compaſſing the earth to and fro) but the whole hoſt of this accurſed kinde of creature, which we know is numerous above meaſure, are certainly enemies to the Scriptures, and ſeek their ruine. The enmity and hatred which the devil bears to the Scriptures, is diſcovered ſeverall waies. 1. in that he watcheth the ſeed of the doctrine thereof, when it is ſown by the hand of the ſpirituall ſeedsman in the hearts of men, and catcheth at it immediately, and many times *ſnatcheth it away*, as ſoon as ever it is fallen upon the ſoul; which ſhews, that he is not willing it ſhould remain there, no not for the ſhorteſt ſeaſon. And if he be not willing it ſhould remain in the heart of a man, ſurely he would not have it have any place of being in the world. But that diſpoſition and practiſe of his we ſpeak of, you ſhall finde cleerly aſſerted by our Saviour himſelf, in his explication of the parable of the ſower. Matth. 19. 13.

2. The devils enmity againſt the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof,

thereof, appears in this; that they are ſtill caſting blocks in one kinde or other, in the way of thoſe, that are moſt able and willing to propagate the knowledge of them in the world; to prevent them of their opportunities, and hinder them from the work. Thus *Paul* complains, that when he was reſolved, and *endeavoured abundantly* to have gon to *Theſſalonica*, to ſtrengthen and edifie the Saints there, *Satan hindered* him. 1 Theſ. 2. 18.

3. In that he attempts the diſcouragement, and moleſtation, both temporall and ſpirituall, of thoſe that are the profeſſours and upholders of them in the world. Thus *Antipas*, a faithfull Martyr, is ſaid to have been ſlain, where *Satans* ſeat or *throne* was, and where he dwelt; to imply, that *Satan* was the chief ſtickler to procure his death. And our Saviour ſignified in his Epiſtle to the Church of *Smyrna*, that *Satan* would caſt ſome of them into priſon, and that they ſhould have perſecution ten daies, *viz.* by his means, and inſtigation of men to perſecute them. Again, that he is ſtill attempting the ſpirituall diſturbance and diſcouragement, of ſuch as hold forth the Scriptures, and the doctrine of them, unto the world, appears from many places. *Reſiſt the devil and he will flee from you*, Jam 4.7. And again: *Above all, taking the ſhield of faith, whereby ye ſhall quench all the fiery darts of the devil*, Epheſ. 6. 16. In which paſſages with many others, there is plain information given of Satans diligence and deſire, to diſturb the inward peace of the precious ſouls of men. Rev. 2. 13. verſ 10. Jam 4 7. 1 Pet 5 8. Eph. 6. 16.

4. The devils hatred againſt the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof, appears in this; that he endeavours all he can to *blinde the mindes of men*, that *the light* of them ſhould not *ſhine* unto them. As farre as lies in his power, he labours to keep the world *in darkneſſe and in the ſhadow of death*; the light of the Goſpel, is to the devil, as *the light of the morning* to the *thief and murtherer* in *Job*, *i.* as *the ſhadow of death*. When it ſhines in the eyes of mens mindes, it is as *a ſword that paſſeth through his ſoul*; yea when men are *lifted up into heaven* by it, the devil is *thrown down* from his heaven, into his hell. When the ſeventy Diſciples, having been ſent forth by our Saviour, to work miracles, and preach the Goſpel, returned back to him, 2 Cor. 4. 4. Job. 14. 17.

relating with joy what great ſucceſſe they had had in their expedition, againſt the devils; our Saviour made them this
Luk. 10 18. anſwer; *I beheld Satan, as lightning, falling from heaven*; *q.d.* I was a ſpectatour of the combate between Satan and you, whilſt you were in the ingagement, about which I ſent you, and knew before you came to relate to me your ſucceſſe, how that great enemie of yours, and of men, the devil, fell before you: *I ſaw him* (ſaith he) *like lightning falling from heaven*, ὡς τὸν οὐρανὸν. out of the heaven, wherein he was before your coming againſt him; *i.* I ſaw him with extream regret and torment quitting the poſſeſſion, which he had before, both of the ſouls, and bodies of men; which poſſeſſions were as a ſecond heaven unto him: but (ſaith *Chriſt*) *I ſaw him falling* from this *heaven* after the ſame manner, or upon the ſame terms that *lightning* ſometimes falls, or rather is forced, from the materiali heavens, or the clouds of heaven (as the Scripture uſually calls them) *i.* by a motion very contrary to his nature and diſpoſition; as the deſcent or falling of lightning, from the heavens, to the earth, is contrary to the nature and proper inclination of it, which being of a fiery and light nature, deſires naturally to aſcend, and to be above, in the circumference, not to deſcend and fall downwards towards the center. But this by the way, to ſhew the main ground and reaſon, of the devils enmity and hatred againſt the Goſpel; *viz.* becauſe it is an engine in the hand of God to batter him down from his heaven upon earth, to diſpoſſeſſe him of that intereſt and hold, he hath in the hearts, and judgements, and lives of men.

5. (And laſtly) his enmity againſt the Scriptures and main doctrine thereof, the Goſpel, appears in this, that he tempts, perſwades, and ingageth men from time to time, to invent and ſubſtitute other Goſpels, and other doctrines, and other Chriſts, as neer, and with as much affinity and ſimilitude, to the true Goſpel, and true doctrines, and the true Chriſt, as he knows how: and ſo to hold them forth unto the world, on purpoſe to trouble and confound the mindes and thoughts of men, and to put the world into a maze, to make men at a loſſe, which, or what to call the Goſpel, or what the truth, or who the true

*Chriſt*;

*Christ*; yea and to make them question whether there be any Gospel, any doctrine, any Christ at all, able, or likely to blesse them. Such wiles, and methods, and stratagems as these put upon the world, are (I conceive) called the doctrines and *depths* of *Satan*, by our Saviour himself, in his epistle to the Church of *Thyatira*. I shall not need to instance in particulars in this kinde; it is two well known, and two commonly found (and it hath been the devils sieve of vanity, to sift all ages and nations withall, where so much as the sound or mention of the Gospel hath come) that there are false Gospels, and false doctrines, and false *Christs*, ever and anon putting forth into the world; yet as neer, and as like the true Gospel, and true doctrines, and the true *Christ*, as the devil can teach his prophets and workmen to shape them; onely providing, that yet there may be so much dissimilitude or unlikenesse between them, as may be sufficient to deceive with danger, and if it be possible, to destroy with death. Now as *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the *Egyptian* Sorcerers, are said to have *withstood Moses*, because by working false miracles, yet in appearance and shew the same with those true and reall miracles, which *Moses* wrought, they opposed and obstructed that conviction in *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, of *Moses* his being sent from God, which otherwise could not lightly but have been effected, by the miracles which *Moses* wrought, and so the deliverance of the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* (which was *Moses* his designe) have been obtained: in like manner they who preach false doctrines, and *another Jesus*, besides him, whom *Paul* preached, yet with such a semblance of those that are true, that they are sufficient to entangle and confound the judgements of men, are as dangerous opposers, and *withstanders* of the able and faithfull Ministers of the Gospel, as any other sect of men whatsoever.

Rev. 2. 14.

2 Tim. 3. 8.

Thus we see (in the first place) that *Beelzebub*, with all his host of *principalities and powers, and spirituall wickednesses*, are profest, yea and ingaged enemies against the Scriptures: ye have in part also heard the reason of it.

2. I adde further, that all wicked and prophane men in the world, are enemies to them also. *He that doth evil* (saith our Saviour)

Joh. 3. 20.

Saviour) [*i.* whosoever doth evil] *hates the light; neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* And those
Rev.11.10. *two Witnesses* (as they are called, *Revel* 11.) *i.* those that held forth the light of the truth of the Scriptures unto the world in the times of that great Antichristian darkness, which overspread (in a manner) the whole face of it, are in respect of that ingagement of theirs, said to have vexed, *or tormented them that dwelt on the earth.* So that the light of the truth contained in the Gospel, is a vexation and *torment* to all earthly minded men; and who is there but hates their tormentours? Wicked and ungodly men, may for some by respects, and out of some carnall ends, come to hear the Scriptures preached; and possibly now and then, by the overruling hand of Gods Providence, may speak a good word, or doe a good piece of
Prov.14 13. service for them. But as *Solomon* saith, that *even in laughter the heart is* (sometimes) *sorrowfull*; and that *the end of that mirth is heavinesse*; so it may truly be said of such men, as we speak of, that whilst they are blessing the Scriptures with their mouthes, or with their hands, they curse them in their hearts, *as if they were their very enemies.* But evident enough it is, that all the wicked and prophane persons in the world, hate the light and purity of the Scriptures. Thus then you see the tenour and truth of the first circumstance. The Scriptures have enemies in abundance; farre more for number, then those
Rev.7.9. Saints spoken of, *Revel.*7. whose *multitude* notwithstanding is there said to be *such*, that *no man could number them.* Doubtlesse, if the *devils* were numbred, from the *Dan* to the *Bethsheba* of hell, and wicked men from the first edition and coming forth of the Scriptures into the world, untill now, from the *Dan* to the *Bethsheba* of the world, the account of this list would rise to a double and treble, if not to an hundred fold proportion above that other.

2. But though the Scriptures have alwaies had many enemies, yet if they have been any thing qualified in their enmity or hatred against them, so that they have rather despised them, then opposed them, or sought their destruction (as the story saith that *Herod* did by two of the brethren of *Christ*, when they were brought before him, because they were poor) the preservation

preſervation of them from ruine by God, were ſo much the leſſe conſiderable; nor would it be an argument of that ſtrength and power, to evince that relation of them unto him, which we labour to aſſert and prove, which it is, and upon due conſideration will be found to be, in caſe it appear, that theſe enemies of theirs, are, and ſtill have been (at leaſt the greateſt part of them) full of wrath, deeply and inveterately ſet in hatred againſt them.

1. For the devils, there is little queſtion but that they bear a *tyrannous hate* againſt them, *hate them with a perfect hatred*, as being their greateſt enemies. If they that *dwell upon earth be tormented* by them, doubtleſſe they that dwell in hell ſeven times more; and proportionable to the torment or damage they receive, or fear to receive from them, ſuch muſt their hatred to them needs be conceived to be. Though ſome ignorant and inconſiderate men and women, may poſſibly rather deſpiſe and neglect the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof, then poſitively hate them, or trouble themſelves with making any oppoſition to them; yet doubtleſſe the *devils* know them better then ſo; I mean, they know them to be of another manner of concernment to them, and their kingdom, of a more formidable importance, then to paſſe them over with contempt, or neglect, *But I hate him* (ſaith *Ahab*, one of the ſons of the *devil*, concerning *Michajah*) *for he doth not propheſie good concerning me, but evil*; In like manner, the *devils* knowing that the Scriptures propheſie *no good*, but *evil* onely *evil*, and that in abundance, concerning them, it is not to be thought, but that they *hate* them, yea and this in abundance alſo. 1 Kings 22.8.

2. That many (at leaſt) and generally, thoſe that are moſt conſiderable, among that other ſort of enemies, which the Scriptures have, and alwaies have had (I mean, evil and ungodly men) are enemies to purpoſe, traveiling (as it were) in pain with the ſuppreſſion and extirpation of them (at leaſt, of that, which is the life and ſoul of them, the truth of the Goſpel) is every whit as evident as the former. *The Kings of the earth* (ſaith *David*) *ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſell together againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed, ſaying;*

Psal. 2 2,3. *let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* These *bands* and cords of the *Lord and his Christ* (or, his anointed one) which *Kings and rulers* set themselves, and take counsell together to break asunder, and so to *cast away* from them (farre enough) are nothing else but those laws and commandments from heaven, which binde them unto subjection to the Gospel, and the will of *Jesus Christ* therein: or, the intire rule, or doctrine of the Gospel; This *the Kings and rulers of the earth*, with their subjects, would have to be broken in pieces, *i.* suppressed, extinguished, extirpated out of the world; that so they might be out of all danger, of being impeded or troubled in the way of their lusts, and earthly designes by it. As the Lord Christ was sought by *Herod*, to be slain as soon (almost) as he was born; so was the slaughter and subversion of his Gospel, whilst it was yet in the infancy of it, attempted by men. Those exhortations of the Apostles to Christians in the primitive times, *to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jude 3. and so, συναγωνίζεσθε, *to strive together with* (rather then, for) *the faith of the Gospel*, with the like, cleerly imply, that the powers and wisdom of the world were bent against that faith and doctrine of the Gospel, which they professed and held forth. It were easie to inlarge in this point. But

Jude 3.
Philip. 1. 27.

3. Though the Scriptures should have, and have had never so many enemies, and those never so full of wrath or hatred against them, yet if they had been contemptible in their power, and had not had wherewithall to have endangered them, the preservation of them, had been but a providence of an ordinary character, or line; or however, had argued no such singular affection, or care in God towards them, as now it doth; considering that these enemies, were not an heap of angry men, without horns, of naked, weak or unarmed men, destitute of power to make any considerable attempt upon the Scriptures; no, there have alwaies been amongst those enemies of the Scriptures we speak of, men that have been abundantly furnished and provided with weapons of all kindes, to make warre against them, whether with the one kinde of warfare or the other (I mean, whether by force, or by skill, either by

slaying

ſlaying the Goſpel only, leaving the men alive, as ſometimes the ſword is melted by lightning, when the ſcabbard is not hurt, or elſe, by deſtroying both together) and who have been, in the eye of reaſon, and according to the ordinary courſe of things in the world, able to deſtroy them from off the face of the earth.

1. For the devils, who are the captains and leaders, under *Beelzebub*, the Generalliſſimo, or commander in chief, of all the forces that ever were levied, or up in arms againſt the Scriptures; theſe are known, to want neither wiles nor methods, ſtratagems, nor deluſions, whereby to circumvent the world (if it were poſſible) of the Scriptures, by repreſenting of them, fabulous, weak, no waies worthy to be beleeved; nor yet power or ſtrength of arme for execution, if there be any thing to be done againſt the Scriptures in that kinde. *Paul* ſpeaking of the oppoſition and danger, which might ariſe unto them from men, or from *fleſh and bloud* (as he calls it) makes light of it, in compariſon of what was to be expected from the devils. *For we wraſtle not againſt fleſh and blond* (which is but a dull and contemptible enemie, in compariſon) *but againſt Principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſſe of this world, againſt ſpirituall wickedneſſes in high places*; meaning, againſt an innumerable company of devils, and theſe of the chiefeſt ranks and orders amongſt them, and conſequently, ſo much more *devils*, *i.* fuller of rage, malice, ſubtilty, activenes, power, *&c.* then their fellows. Ephes. 6. 12.

2. For men, who have been enemies to the Scriptures, yea, and have profeſſed it; amongſt theſe alſo there have been, both lions, and foxes: many who have had ſtrength of arme in abundance, and been great in power; and many alſo who have had ſtrength of brain; and great proviſions of the wiſdom and ſubtilty of this world. So that if God had not preſerved the Scriptures, as well againſt the one, as the other, there was neither of theſe kindes of enemies, but might eaſily have deſtroyed them from the face of the earth.

1. How great a part of the powers of this world (I mean of the Kings and Princes of the earth) who have been formidable in their daies for their power, and made the earth to

ſhake round about them, farre and neer, whoſe *hand found many enterpriſes*, (as *David* ſpeaks) *i.* performed many exploits of farre more difficult performance in the eye of reaſon, then the demoliſhing of the Scriptures, have been enemies unto them? Were they not the *Kings and rulers of the earth*, who
Pſal. 2 2,3. (as we heard before from *David*, Pſal. 2.) *ſet themſelves, and took counſell together, againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed; ſaying, let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us? i.* in effect (as we interpreted) let us deſtroy that law, that doctrine, that Religion, whereby they ingage the world unto them, and are troubleſome unto us in our way, and would make even us alſo ſubject unto them. Thoſe great and *famous Kings* (as *David* calls them) which God vanquiſhed
Pſ. 136. 17,18. and ſlew by the hand of his people, in their paſſage to the land of *Canaan*, becauſe they oppoſed them therein, were profeſſed enemies to the Scriptures which then were, as well as to thoſe, that profeſſed and held them forth in the world. So were the great Kings of *Aſſyria*, and *Babylon* afterwards; the great Monarchs and Potentates of the world. *Antiochus*, who reigned (or rather, raged) in the times of the *Maccabees*, and whoſe rage and cruelty againſt the Jews and their Religion were propheſied of by *Daniel* many years before, had power to doe, yea and did greater things in appearance (of which you may read in the ſecond book of the ſtory of the *Maccabees*, chap. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.) then the defacing of the Scriptures and the Religion of the Jews; upon which notwithſtanding his heart was as much ſet as any other deſigne whatſoever. Afterwards the heathen Emperours of *Rome*, who were Lords in a manner, of the whole world, as *one of their own Prophets* ſaid, *Romanæ ſpacium eſt urbis, & orbis idem*; *i.* the City of *Rome* (meaning in her dominion) and the world, are of one and the ſame compaſſe and extent; were known enemies to the Scriptures, to the doctrine and Religion of Chriſt, and fell on perſecuting, eſpecially ſome of them, as if they had been reſolved to leave neither root, nor branch, nor ſo much as any mention or memoriall, of Chriſt, or Chriſtian Religion in the world. I paſſe by the mention of all thoſe Kings, and Nations, who have been enemies to the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof,

thereof, ſince the time of theſe Roman Emperours (though in ſimple conſideration, many of them were very conſiderable in power) becauſe they were yet farre inferiour in this kinde to thoſe others. Thus then you ſee (in the firſt place) that the enemies of the Scriptures, whether *devils* or men, have allwaies had a great and formidable arme of fleſh, ſtrength and power of hand in abundance; ſo that the difference in this kinde, between them, and the Scriptures, hath been like that which was (at leaſt, was apprehended) between the old inhabitants of the land of *Canaan*, and the Iſraelites; the one were as *gyants*, the other as *graſhoppers*, in compariſon of them. And yet as theſe *graſhoppers*, overthrew thoſe *gyants*; ſo have the Scriptures, which have been but as *graſhoppers* in compariſon of their enemies, from firſt to laſt, had the better of them; and may ſay with the Church of God, in the like caſe (ſpeaking of her enemies) *Pſal.* 20. *They are brought down and fallen; but we are riſen and ſtand upright.* The Scriptures never ſtood ſo ſtrong and *upright* in the world, in reſpect of outward ſtrength to ſupport them, as they doe at this day; whereas their enemies *fall* before them daily. Pſal. 20 8.

2. The enemies of the Scriptures, as they have been armed with ſtrength of hand to work their ruine in that kinde; ſo have they been furniſhed with another ſtrength too, every whit as proper, as advantagious, and as likely to proſper in an attempt againſt a doctrine, an opinion, a Religion, as that other kinde of ſtrength is; I mean, with wit, ſubtilty, parts, guifts, endowments, as of eloquence, knowledge of arts and ſciences, *&c.* It was ſaid of one of the *Grecian* oratours (*Carneades* by name, as I remember) that *he never pleaded any cauſe but that he carried it.* My brethren, parts of wit, eloquence and knowledge, as they may be raiſed, and as they are found in ſome, what is it (almoſt) in that kinde we ſpeak of, but they are able to doe? The Heathen Oratour ſpake (doubtleſſe) out of experience in part, as well as out of judgement, when he ſaid, that there was *nihil tam dictu incredibile, quod dicendo non fiat probabile*; *i.* that there was nothing ſo incredible in the bare ſpeaking of it, but that may be made very probable by pleading and arguing for it. And it is (in many caſes at leaſt)

as true on the other hand; that there is nothing ſo credible, or like unto truth, in the bare affirming or propoſall, but may be ſo disfigured by reaſonings and arguments brought againſt it, that it may be made to look like a palpable errour. Eſpecially this incruſtation or palliation of truths and errours by ſtrength of parts, as of wit, eloquence, *&c.* is moſt likely to doe execution upon, and to beguile perſons of lower parts, and weak underſtandings; and moſt of all, if they be ſingle, and plain-hearted withall. Now then this is that which I ſay; that men of the greateſt abilities, and naturall parts and endowments, for wit, learning, eloquence, *&c.* have been oppoſers of the Goſpel (which indeed is the ſumme and ſubſtance of the Scriptures) and have laboured with all their ſtrength and might to overthrow the goings of it in the world; and on the other hand, thoſe that have beleeved it, and ſtood up to plead the cauſe of it, have (for the moſt part) been perſons of inferiour guifts and parts, and ſuch as were little raiſed or holpen by education; and withall perſons of plain, open, and ſingle ſpirits. The Scriptures themſelves give teſtimony of both theſe; and the teſtimony of other writers doe in this fully accord with them. *For ye ſee your calling brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe*, &c. See the other Scriptures in the margent.

1 Cor. 1. 26, 27, 28. verſ. 20. Act. 17. 18. Coloſ. 2. 8.

For the teſtimony of other authours; it is well known to thoſe that are acquainted with the Church ſtory, and the writings of *Juſtine Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, and others, that *Porphyrie* a great Philoſopher, an acute and ſubtile man, with *Lucian*, *Libainus*, and many others not much inferiour to them, were profeſſed enemies to the Scriptures, and to the whole doctrine of *Chriſtian* Religion; and ſought with all their heart, and with all their ſoul, with all their might, and with all their ſtrength, to lay waſt the honour, intereſt, and authority of the Scriptures, and to make the doctrine of Chriſtian Religion an abhorring unto the world; a loathing to the ſouls and conſciences of men. And yet we ſee that God hath carried theſe Scriptures and the Religion we ſpeak of through this fire and

water

water alſo, without ſuffering either the flames to kindle on them, or the ſloods to drown them; and their feet now ſtand in a wealthy place, they are in as much, or more honour, and acceptance in the world, then ever; yea and this without any diminution of their ſubſtance, without any impairment or violation of any ſentence therein (as we ſhall have occaſion to ſhew afterwards) So that as it is ſaid of thoſe three ſervants of God, whom *Nebuchadnezzar* cauſed *to be caſt into the midſt of an hot fiery furnace*, becauſe they would not worſhip his golden image, that though they had been in the fire, yet there was not ſo much as an *hair of their head burnt, nor their garments ſinged, nor any ſmell of fire upon them*; ſo may it be ſaid of the Scriptures, though they have been caſt by Satan into the midſt of ſo many fiery oppoſitions and conteſtations of men in all ages, yet have not theſe oppoſitions or conteſtations, had the leaſt power over them; there is not the leaſt *hair of their head fallen to the ground* by means of them. Are not theſe then the Scriptures of God? And as a father pleaded the cauſe of this relation of his, to one that doubted it, by this argument, *Et patrio pater eſſe metu probor*, I am ſufficiently proved to be thy father, by that fatherly care or fear I have of thee: In like manner, Gods fatherly care to preſerve the Scriptures in the midſt of all dangers and enemies, is a demonſtration of his fatherly relation to them. Eſpecially, if we ſhall conſider how many books and writings beſides, which have been the darlings of the world, and which have had no enemies, no oppoſers (at leaſt none conſiderable) are yet periſhed out of the world, ſcarce ſo much remaining of many of them, as there did of *Jezebel*, when there was nothing of her to be found, but only *her ſkull and feet, and the palmes of her hands* (2 *King* 9.35.) and that within a leſſe compaſſe of time, then the Scriptures have continued, at leaſt ſince the firſt edition of them by *Moſes* into the world? To mention only thoſe writings or books of *Solomon* (mentioned, 1 *King*.4.33. compared with *chap.* 11.41.) wherein he wrote (doubtleſſe) a more compleat ſtory of nature, and naturall things, then ever was written either before or ſince, even *from the cedar in Lebanon, to the hyſop that ſprings out of the Wall*; as likewiſe *concerning*

*ing beasts and fouls, and creeping things, and fishes*; these writings I say of his, though they had no enemie, none to oppose them (nor was there any pretence or colour for any to be enemies unto them) nay in reason it cannot be thought, but that men generally made great treasure of them, and highly valued them; yet these long agoe, for may generations by past, have *seen corruption*, and are as if they had not been: whereas those writings of his, which by the providence and spirit of God, were imbodied with the Scriptures, as the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and the *Canticles*, though they have had enemies in abundance, and have been opposed in all the oppositions, which the rest of the Scriptures have been opposed withall, yet they live; yea they are like unto those that are *planted in the house of the Lord, they bring forth fruit in their old age, they are fat and flourishing*, Psal.92.13,14. But

4. Suppose the Scriptures should have had never so many enemies, and these never so inveterate, and full of wrath and malice; yea and never so compleatly furnished and armed with strength and power in every kinde to execute their wrath upon them; yet if they never had had an opportunity to have acted, or made use of their power in this kinde, if the Scriptures had never come in their way, or where they had to doe, upon such terms, as that there was a likelihood they might have crushed them, and made them sure from lifting up their head any more in the world; the preservation of them in the world, would be nothing so pregnant and lively a testimony of a speciall interposall by God on their behalf; and consequently no such eviction, that he himself is the authour and father of them. But if it can appear, that these enemies of theirs have had that opportunity we speak of from time to time, so that in all outward appearance, they have been as much in their hand and power, as *John* the Baptist was in the power of his enemies when they *did to him, even what they listed*; or as the Lord *Christ* himself was in the hand of his, when they put him to death; their preservation upon such terms as these, cannot reasonably be looked upon, but as a consideration teaching with authority their descent from God, and relation to him, as a father.

First

First then, it is to be considered (in the generall) that look at what advantage the enemies of the Scriptures we speak of, have at any time had the Church and people of God, who have been at all times the onely keepers of this treasure, at the same advantage they have had the treasure it self (I mean, the Scriptures) so that what opportunity they have had at any time to destroy and root out the one from the earth, the like they had to destroy the other also. The Church of God is said to be, *the pillar and ground*, or settlement (ἑδραίωμα) *of truth*, or of the truth; meaning, of the Scriptures, or word of God, which by the Lord *Christ* himself, is affirmed to be *the truth: Sanctifie them With thy truth, thy Word is the truth.* Now the Church of God is said, 1. to be *the pillar of truth*, because they are that body and society of men in the world, which hold forth that writing or book (I mean, the Scriptures) wherein the great truth of heaven, and of God, is contained. The expression (doubtlesse) is borrowed, from the manner and custome of those times; which it seems by the records of history more ancient then they, was received by them, and continued, from the first times and ages of the world, before books made of paper, parchment, or any such kinde of materiall, were invented or known. In these times (say some) it was the manner of those that were learned, and had knowledge of things any waies secret, and yet worthy to be known, to ingrave them in great pillars, or monuments built for that purpose, either of brick or stone, that so they might be for the use of the present, and likewise preserved for the benefit of posterity in future generations. But whether this custom of writing in or upon pillars, were either so ancient, as is pretended, or ever in use at all; certain it is (and there is frequent and cleer mention of it in authours of best credit) that it was an usuall custome in *Rome*, about the times of the Apostle *Paul*, for those that were desirous to publish any thing by way of writing unto the world, to fasten or set up their books upon pillars in publike places, for people to read; much after the same manner, as we see bills, and writings, and titles of books, pasted upon pillars in the Exchange. Now look what office or service those pillars did, to those authours, who

2 Tim. 3. 15.

Joh. 17. 17.

ſet up their books or writings upon them, or to the books themſelves; which was to hold forth the contents of ſuch writings unto publike and open view; the ſame doth the Church of God, unto God himſelf, and to his book, or writing, which he hath put therein (the Scriptures) it holds forth the Doctrine, and all the truth, and truths contained in this book, unto the world. Again, 2. This Church of God is called ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, the *ground*, firmament, or firm-ſettlement, or ſeat of the *truth*; becauſe God hath not only appointed it, to hold forth the Scriptures unto the world, after the manner of a *Pillar*, which in time may decay, and become ruinous; and then whatſoever depends upon it for publike repreſentation, is from thenceforth diſappointed in that kinde; but hath made it a *pillar*, in the nature of a foundation; which uſually is the ſtrongeſt part of the building, and remains, when all the building beſides is ruined: he hath made it as a firm and grounded ſeat for the Scriptures, or the truth (as it were) to ſit and reſt upon for ever. So that now there being, by the will and appointment of God (as you ſee) ſuch an abſolute dependance between the Scriptures and the Church of God in the world, that theſe cannot be held forth unto the world, but by it; nor yet have any place of abode, or being in the world, but in it; evident it is, that look at what advantage the enemies of the Church, or of the Scriptures, have had the Church it ſelf at any time, what opportunities they have had at any time, to make havock, and utter deſolation of this; the ſame advantages, the ſame opportunity they have had to make the Scriptures a deſolation alſo. Now it is (I preſume) a thing generally known unto us all (and ſo we ſhall not need to ſpend time in proof of it) that that company, or fellowſhip of perſons in the world, which are the Church of God, have been from time to time (yea perpetually almoſt and without any *lucidum intervallum*, without any *interim* at all of any better poſture or condition) obnoxious, in outward appearance, to the wrath, rage and power of her enemies; and no waies able to have made reſiſtance, or to have defended her ſelf, in caſe they had come forth againſt her, and aſſaulted her, with all that ſtrength and power which they might eaſily have levied

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and raiſed up in the world againſt her. It is true, the Church of God hath had ſome criticall daies and houres, wherein for one moment, ſhe hath been in greater danger then ordinary, of being ruined and ſwallowed up at once; and immediately after, upon a miraculous deliverance or eſcape from the danger, hath been upon terms of more ſecurity and ſafety then ordinary; but let her caſe and condition even in her greateſt glory of outward ſtrength, be diligently conſidered; and there will ſcarce be found at any time, any more diſtance (in appearance) then a ſtep, between her ſoul, and death, between her preſent ſtanding, and falling in the world.

But more particularly (in the ſecond place) Satan, and the reſt of the enemies of the Scriptures have had them at a greater advantage to ſuppreſſe them, and to cauſe them to ceaſe from the world at once, at ſome times, then at others. It ſeems that in the daies of King *Joſiah*, there was but one copie or tranſcript, if not of the whole body of the Scriptures, which then were, yet of the principall and moſt materiall part of it (I mean, of the law, and all the writings of *Moſes*) and this (as appears by circumſtances in the ſtory) very likely to have been quite loſt, and never ſeen more. For firſt, if there had been any more copies of this part of the Scripture we ſpeak of, then that, which was caſually found by *Hilkiah* the Prieſt in the temple; it is not like, but a King ſo zealouſly and piouſly given as *Joſiah* was, would by one means or other have furniſhed himſelf with one: eſpecially the injunction of God upon the Kings being ſo expreſſe and ſtrict as is to be ſeen, *Deut.* 17.18,19. And ſecondly, the deportment of the King upon hearing the book read, being ſo extraordinarily affected, and afflicted in minde about it, as to *rend his cloaths, and weep*, with ſome other expreſſions, cleerly ſhew, that the very contents of the book were ſtrange, and before this, unknown to him. Thirdly, the carriage of the Prieſt, who is ſaid to have found the book, in ſending it as a choice preſent, by the hand of ſuch a meſſenger as *Shaphan* (a chief officer of ſtate) was, evinceth the ſame thing; *viz.* that it was a rarity indeed, and that there were no more copies or tranſcripts of this writing. Fourthly (and laſtly) by the ſtrangeneſſe of the contents of

2 King. 22. 8.

2 Chron. 34. 14.

Deut. 17. 18, 19.

the book (as they appeared both to the Prieſt himſelf, the Scribe that carried it to the King, and the King that heard it read) it ſeems that there had been no copie of it extant for a long time before, and that the tenour, ſubſtance, and contents of it, were matters altogether unknown, not to the generality of the people onely, but even to the Prieſts themſelves, upon whoſe *lips* it lay (in ſpeciall manner) *to preſerve knowledge*; yea and to the King alſo. It is conceived by ſome, that it was purpoſely conveyed out of the way, and intended to have been buried in perpetuall darkneſſe, by ſome idolatrous King or other, ſome Prieſt, one or more, being of the ſame accurſed counſell, and complying with him therein; that ſo it might have been ſuppreſſed for ever. So that during all the time, that the book we ſpake of, was loſt, and laid up in the chambers of darkneſſe, *Satan* (at leaſt) had an opportunity to have avenged himſelf of it, had not his hand been reſtrained and held back by one ſtronger then himſelf. And if that conjecture of ſome which we ſpake of, be true (and there is much probability in it) that the book of the law was hidden by ſome idolatrous King or Prieſt, or both, in ſome uncouth and obſcure hole in the wall of the Temple, with an intention, that it ſhould there have periſhed, and never been found more; the providence of God is ſo much the more remarkable in and about the preſervation of it; as it was in permitting *Satan* to ſmite *Job* with a very noiſome and grievous diſeaſe, yet without ſuffering him to touch his life. For if the mighty hand of God had not overruled thoſe, whoever they were, that hid the book of the law, with an intent wholly to ſuppreſſe, or to deſtroy it, and to have it never more ſeen; they might in reaſon, as well have ſecretly burnt it with fire, or cut it in pieces with a penknife, or the like, and ſo have made ſure that it ſhould never have come to light, nor been ſeen more, as to throw it into a by hole, where, though it were not very probable that it would, yet very poſſible it was, that it might be found before it was conſumed. When the City *Jeruſalem* was ſacked, and burnt with fire, and the Temple it ſelf burnt likewiſe, defaced, made little other then a ruinous heap, and ſo all the while, during the ſeventy years captivity, there was a large opportunity before the God

Job. 2. 6

2 Chron. 36. 19.

of

of this world, to have bound up the Scriptures in the ſame bundle of common calamity and deſtruction with the City, houſe, and people of God; had not the God of heaven put his *hook in his noſe*, and ſaid unto him, deſtroy them not. Again, in the daies of *Diocletian* the Emperour, who ſet on foot the laſt and moſt grievous of the ten primitive perſecutions (as they are commonly called) about the year of Chriſt, 302. there being this edict ſet forth amongſt many others, for the rooting out of Chriſtianity from the earth; to injoin all Chriſtians that had Bibles, or books of Chriſtianity, under pain of moſt grievous torments, to deliver them into the hands of thoſe, that were ſent about by the Emperour to gather them, to be burnt with fire; there was an opportunity for Satan and his agents, to have put an end and period to the reign, yea or being, of the Scriptures in the world: Eſpecially conſidering, 1. that the number of Bibles, copies of them being then farre more chargeable, and harder to be gotten, then now, by reaſon they were then all written (which was very coſtly, in compariſon of Printing) could not be proportionably ſo many to the number of Chriſtians, as now they are; partly alſo, that many of thoſe Chriſtians, who had Bibles, through the weakneſſe of their faith, and for fear of the torments threatned, did deliver them into the hand of the inquiſitours to be burnt (for which they were in after times, branded by Chriſtians with the diſgracefull name of *Traditores*, *i.* traytors, or deliverers) which yielding in ſome, was of very dangerous conſequence, to have weakned the hand of others alſo, and ſo to have cauſed an utter ſurrender, or delivering up of all the copies of the Bible in the world, to have been burnt with fire. But God, as it appears at this day, watched over this book (the Scriptures) in this dangerous exigent; and would not ſell them into the hand of the enemie, at any rate; but ſtrengthened the hearts and hands of ſome in the very face and preſence of the fiery rage of the Emperour, and torments threatned, to value the lives of their books above their own. For the doctrine of Chriſtianity (more properly ſo called) and the books of the new Teſtament, what an opportunity had that great enemie of God and good men, with his inſtru-

ments, either to have prevented their riſing up, and coming forth into the world, when the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, who were the penmen and publiſhers of them, were ſo inconſiderable, both for their number, and quality alſo, or power in the world, and might in reaſon, and according to the courſe of other things, have eaſily been taken out of the way, before they had been delivered of thoſe writings; or elſe, to have prevented (at leaſt) their continuance, and propagating in the world, by laying out, and making ſearch for them, when the copies extant were yet but few. Theſe opportunities, and ſome others (poſſibly) like unto theſe, the enemies of the Scriptures have had for a totall ſuppreſſion, or quenching of the light of them in the world. Severall other oppoſers alſo they have had, for the adulterating and corrupting of them, for the mangling and maiming of them; more eſpecially theſe two: The firſt, all the while the Chriſtian world lay under a deluge or inundation of *Arrianiſme*; the latter, when it lay under the like inundation and overſpreading of *Antichriſtian* apoſtacy, and idolatrie; which was lower down towards theſe preſent times, and not many generations paſt. Under both theſe eſtates or conditions of the Chriſtian world, Satan had a marveilous advantage, to have procured a depravation of the Scriptures, at leaſt in thoſe places and paſſages, which riſe up with greateſt evidence and ſtrength againſt thoſe errours, wherewith the whole body (in a manner) of Chriſtian profeſſion, was now infected. What might not the faction of *Arrius*, being ſo numerous and potent, having not only the generality of ordinary Chriſtians, but the nobility and great perſons in the Empire, yea the Emperours themſelves for their abettours, have done, to deprave and falſifie all ſuch places, which plainly hold forth the Divinity, or Godhead of *Chriſt*? In like manner, when *Antichriſt* and his apoſtatizing party had all the Chriſtian world (in a manner) both Princes and people *wondering after them*, and by this means had the ſole intereſt in correcting and ſetting forth all the new impreſſions of the Scriptures from time to time, what might not they in all likelihood have done, to have compelled the Scriptures to ſpeak plainly for the Religion of *Rome*, which now they oppoſe

oppoſe with cleereſt evidence and demonſtration? But we ſee, that God by a mighty providence, and by a ſtrange overruling of their ſpirits, hath not ſuffered the Scriptures to feel ſo much as the weight of the little finger of either of them, in this kinde.

5. (And laſtly) Suppoſe the Scriptures ſhall have had never ſo many enemies; and theſe never ſo full of wrath and envie againſt them; yea, and armed withall manner of power to have wrought their ruine; yea further, that they had had opportunities from time to time to have effected their ruine; yet if they had been negligent and ſlept away their opportunities, and done nothing at any time to effect it, the preſervation and protection of them had not been altogether of that wonderfull conſideration, which now it is; conſidering, that ſome of theſe opportunities have been improved by a very high hand, and with much diligence and vigour, to ſuch an end. And for thoſe, which ſuch perſons as we ſpeak of, have overſeen waking, or elſe have hoped to carry on their deſigne againſt the truth, without attempting any thing by way of alteration, or depravation of the letter of the Scriptures, the divine interpoſall is as evident in either of theſe, as it could have been, in cauſing the higheſt attempts in this kinde to miſcarry.

But that ſeverall things have been upon advantage and opportunity, attempted with the deepeſt ingagement of heart and hand from time to time, either directly or indirectly againſt the Scriptures by the enemies thereof, to overthrow them, is evident by what hath been already ſaid. *Pharaoh drove* as furiouſly as *Jehu*, after the Church of God, to overtake and deſtroy them (and conſequently, the Scriptures with them) when he had them in a body together in the wilderneſſe, untill the wheels of his chariots were miraculouſly taken off by the hand of heaven; and then he ſlaked his pace, and (as the text ſaith) *drove heavily*. They that hid the book of the law in the Temple wall, hoping it would never have been found there, did that which was probable enough to have deprived the world of all further uſe of, or benefit by, it. But he that *draws light out of darkneſſe*, looſed the bands of that darkneſſe, wherewith this treaſure of light was bound for a time, and raiſed it, and the world it ſelf together with it, from death

unto

unto life. *Antiochus* ſirnamed *Epiphanes*, which ſignifies the illuſtrious, or famous, whom others (with more agreeableneſſe to his ſpirit and practiſes, and with no great variation in the ſound) called *Epimanes*, *i.* the furious, or mad; of whom *Daniel* propheſieth, both in his eighth, and eleventh chapters; in the former (*verſ.*23.) calling him *a King of fierce countenance*; in the latter, ſaying that *his heart ſhould be againſt the holy covenant, and that he ſhould have indignation againſt the holy covenant* (*verſ.*30.) meaning, againſt the law of God, the Scriptures which then were amongſt the Jews; this *Antiochus* (I ſay) did proſecute his indignation and hatred *againſt the holy covenant*, with all extremity; and came ſuddenly upon the City *Jeruſalem*, being newly ſhaken, and much weakned with the factions and cruell doings of ſome of her malignant citizens and Prieſts within her, and by a violent ſtorm took it, and made a moſt miſerable ſlaughter, of perſons of all ſorts, men, women, and children; and in ſpeciall manner, by threatning and inflicting moſt barbarous and cruell torments, ſought the ruine and ſubverſion of their law; as you may read more at large in the ſtory of the *Maccabees*, in the 5,6,7, and 8. chapters of the ſecond book of that hiſtory. And ſo the Emperour *Diocletian* (of whom we ſpake before) after the poor *Chriſtians*, with their Religion, had been grievouſly perſecuted, oppreſſed, and waſted by nine ſeverall perſecutions in the daies of his predeceſſours, he with a full reſolution to root out *Chriſtians* and *Chriſtianity*, with the very remembrance and memoriall of them (if it were poſſible) from under the heavens, meaning (as it ſeems) to doe that by whole-ſale, which the former Emperours attempted to doe by retail; advanceth a perſecution againſt both, with a far higher hand of ſubtilty, cruelty, and bloud, then any of the former had been. The edicts which he commanded with greateſt ſeverity to be put in execution againſt *Chriſtians* and Chriſtianity, were theſe and ſuch like: 1. *ut dirnerentur eccleſiæ*; that their meeting places ſhould be demoliſhed and pulled down. 2. *ut omnes Chriſtianorum Scripturæ igni traderentur*, *i.* that all the Scriptures, or writings which *Chriſtians* had concerning their Religion, ſhould be delivered up to the fire. 3. *Ut qui*

Dan.ch.8. & 9.

*honores*

*honores fuiſſent adepti, deponerentur, i.* that all Chriſtians who were in any place of office, or honour, ſhould be depoſed, and put by them (the copy or arch-type, as it ſeems, of one principall vein in the body of that deſigne, which lately diſcovered it ſelf, to be ſet on foot and driven on, againſt the faithfull ſervants of God amongſt us.) 5. *Ut cæteri libertate privarentur*; that all others of them ſhould be deprived, or debarredof their liberty (another lineament of that deformed face we ſpake of) 5. and laſtly, *ut omnes ubiq; Eccleſiarum Præſides conjicerentur in vincula, i.* that all the heads or governours of Churches ſhould be put in priſon, *& quibuſcunq; adhibitis machinis, victimas idolis immolare cogerentur, i.* and that they ſhould by all manner of means, both fair and foul, be compelled to offer ſacrifice unto his Idols. Theſe, with ſome other ſuch edicts as theſe, were put in execution with that vigour, and ſucceſſe (at leaſt as the Emperour himſelf was perſwaded to beleeve) that he thought his deſire was now in his boſome; and that he had eaſed himſelf, and the world, of the burthen of Chriſtianity for ever. For by the merit of this worthy act, deſiring to make himſelf famous unto all poſterity, he cauſed a monument or pillar to be erected with this inſcription: *Diocletiano Cæſari Auguſto, ſuperſtitione Chriſti ubiq; deletâ. i. For* Diocleſian *the Emperour, having deſtroyed, or aboliſhed the ſuperſtition of Chriſt all over the world.* Thus we ſee in part, not only what enemies the Scriptures have ſtill had, as well for multitudes, as for fierceneſſe of wrath, and greatneſſe of power in every kinde; not only what opportunities they have had from time to time, to have made them as duſt before the winde; wholly (I mean) to have deſtroyed them; but alſo what ſore and dangerous attempts have been made by them upon advantages and opportunities, again and again, to cauſe them to ceaſe for ever from the world. For beſides thoſe few particulars that have been now mentioned; there have been a thouſand machinations and politique deſignes ſet on foot; not only the ſtrongeſt hands, and longeſt armes, but alſo the beſt wits, and ſubtileſt heads, the profoundeſt learning, the moſt plauſible eloquence that the world could afford, have been ingaged to the uttermoſt line of their ſphere, to out-law the Scriptures,

and leave them neither place, nor being in the world. And yet we see that they stand; and are as mighty, and as like to stand still in the world, as ever; all their enemies, with all their counsells, imaginations, attempts and machinations against them, from first to last, are fallen, and ready to fall before them: whereas many other books and writings, which had no enemies, no opposition either from devils, or men; nay which had friends in abundance, that loved them, and looked after them; are wholly perished, and lost, their very memoriall scarce remaining. Doe not these things, duly considered, speak plainly, and without any Parable, that the Scriptures are the darlings of heaven, and the *most high* the preserver of them? Were he not the father of them, would he have unbared his arme from time to time (as we have heard) to deliver them?

But behold (in the second place) yet a further confirmation of the relation asserted between God and them. The life and being of the Scriptures, have not only been preserved, in the midst of all those *deaths*, that have been threatned, and attempted against them; but there hath not been so much as a *bone of them broken*; neither hath any limbe, or member perished from of their body, in all those sharp and fiery encounters, which they have sustained from their enemies; I mean, there is no part, or parcell of them wanting, or that hath miscarried, to this day. It is true, that not only *Bellarmine*, and the Papists more generally, but some of the ancient fathers, yea and some Protestant and learned writers themselves, of later times, as Doctour *Whitaker* by name, are of opinion, that divers books, and parcels of writing, which were sometimes part of the Canonicall Scriptures, are wholly lost, and past recovery; as (by name) the *three thousand parables or proverbs of Solomon*, and a thousand five hundred songs (or as some read, five thousand songs) spoken of, 1 *King*. 4.32. so the *books of Nathan the Prophet, and of Gad the Seer*, mentioned, 2 *Chr*. 29.29. And again *the Prophecie of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo, or Addo the Seer*, spoken of, 2 *Chron* 9. *So the Epistle of Paul Written to the Laodiceans*, mentioned, *Col*. 4.16. (as the place is commonly taken; though here be no mention made of any Epistle written by him to *Laodicea*; but only of

1 Kin 4.32.
1 Cro. 29,26.
2 Cro, 9, 9.

Col. 4, 16.

one

one written from *Laodicea*) And there may possibly be the same difficulty, or objection concerning some others.

But others again of the Ancients, as *Origen* and *Austin* by name, and the greater part of our late learned writers, as *Junius*, *Polanus* and others, conceive (and that doubtlesse according to the truth) that no book or piece of writing, that ever was truly Canonicall, *i*, that ever did belong either to the old, or new Testament, as any part or member of either, was ever lost; but that both these, as well the old as the new, and again, the new, as well as the old Testament, are as whole, and as compleat as ever. For

1. If any book or parcell of that writing, which was commended unto the Church of God, for a rule of faith or manners, be lost, it must argue a strange conspiracy of this whole Church in carlessenesse and negligence; and such as is not lightly incident to this generation of men. It is true, some particular Churches, and single persons, have rejected some parts of the Scriptures, now generally acknowledged for *Canonicall*; but the whole Church never hath been known to doe any such thing. And besides, there is no reason to judge, nor can it ever be proved, that any book or piece of writing, which ever, or at any time was judged by the whole Church of God, to belong to the Scriptures, *viz.* as part, either of the old or new Testament, and was afterward either doubted of, or rejected by any particular Church, one, or more, is now lost, or perished. As for the old Testament, against the intireness whereof the arguments insisted upon, by way of objection, seem to lie strongest; the zeal which the Jewish nation have alwaies, and doe still at this very day, bear to the writings of *Moses*, and their *Prophets*, and other writings which they count sacred (which are the very same with those which we call the Scriptures of the old Testament) is known to be such, that there is very little ground to imagine, that they have suffered any of them to be lost.

2. Neither doe we read, that either *Christ* or his Apostles, who were wont to reprove the *Jews*, and to tell them of the sins of their fore-fathers, ever so much as intimated unto them any such sinne, as either the defalcation, or dismembring of

the Scriptures, or the ſuffering of any part or parcell of them to periſh, or to be loſt: which (doubtleſſe) had been a ſin moſt worthy rebuke, had they been guilty of it. Nor is it credible that our Saviour, and all his Apoſtles would have kept ſilence of it, had they been juſtly chargeable with it. Our Saviour indeed chargeth the Scribes and Phariſeees with *tranſgreſſing the commandments of God, by their tradition*, yea to have *made* a ſpeciall *commandment of God of none effect by their tradition*; and again, that they were the *children of thoſe, who ſlew the Prophets*; but he no where chargeth them, with being *the children of thoſe, who* deſtroyed, or *ſlew* the *Prophecies* themſelves, or with aboliſhing the letter or writing of any jot or tittle of the law, or of any the commandments of God, which yet had been a farre greater ſinne then the other, the *ſlaying of the Prophets*. Nay he gives this teſtimony unto the *Jews* in generall, that they ſo farre honoured and regarded the Scriptures, that *in them they hoped to have eternall life*. Doubtleſſe, they that made ſuch a treaſure as this of them, would not be injurious to them, in impairing them, nor yet negligent in preſerving them. Yea God himſelf by putting this nation and people in truſt with his Oracles (which the Apoſtle *Paul* affirms he did, and numbers it amongſt the great and honourable priviledges of this nation; that they were ſo truſted by him) did judge them faithfull in this kinde, and meet for ſuch a truſt; as the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of himſelf, and of his being put into the Miniſtry of the Goſpel by Chriſt, *who counted me faithfull* (ſaith he) *and put me into the Miniſtry*: So God counted the nation of the *Jews* faithfull, as touching their care and cuſtody of the Scriptures; and therefore truſted them with the keeping of them. Yea their truſtineſſe and faithfullneſſe in this kinde was ſuch, that *Philo* the *Jew*, an ancient, learned, and approved authour of that Nation (though he wrote in Greek) affirms, that *from the going forth of the children of Iſrael out of Egypt, till his daies, which was above two thouſand years, there was not ſo much as a word changed or altered in the law of the Hebrews*; yea and adds further, that *there was not any Jew, but would rather die a hundred times over, then ſuffer his Law to be changed in the leaſt*: yea the care, or ſhall I ſay the ſuperſtition,

Mat. 15,3. 6.

Mat. 23,30,31.

Joh 5,39.

Rom. 3,2.

1. Tim. 1 12.

ſuperſtition, or Religious ſcrupuloſity of this people, was ſuch, for the preſerving the divine Oracles committed unto them, from either maim, or alteration, that ſome of them imployed themſelves to tell and take a perfect account, how often every letter in the Alphabet was uſed in every book thereof. So that (doubtleſſe) there is nothing, neither jot, nor tittle, ſyllable or letter of the Scriptures of the old Teſtament, that hath miſcarried.

3. That none of them, nor any part of them, was loſt, or wanting in the Apoſtles daies, is evident from that of the Apoſtle *Paul* to *Timothy*; where he doth not only affirm, that the *holy Scriptures, which Timothy had known from a childe*, were *able to make him wiſe unto ſalvation*; but further, that *they were profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſſe*; and all this to ſuch a degree, *that the man of God* (*i.* a teacher or Miniſter of the Goſpel) *may be perfect, thorowly furniſhed unto all good Works*. So that if we ſhall ſuppoſe, that any of the Scriptures were wanting, when the Apoſtle gave this high teſtimony unto them, concerning their ſufficiency, for all ends and purpoſes, for which they were given or intended (at leaſt in reference to the ſtate of the Church in theſe times) we muſt ſuppoſe withall, that thoſe which were wanting, were little better then ſuperfluous; at leaſt in reſpect of any thoſe great ends and purpoſes, for which they were given; which is little leſſe then blaſphemous to conceive of the Oracles of God. So that there is no queſtion to be made, but that the body of the Scriptures was as whole and intire in the Apoſtles daies, as God himſelf had made it. And that it hath been impaired, or maimed ſince the Apoſtles daies, many of the Papiſts themſelves, who yet generally ſeek to make the Scriptures lame, that ſo they may make the authority of their Church whole, have not (as is obſerved by ſome of our learned Proteſtant Divines) as yet attempted to affirm. And *Bellarmine* himſelf, having ſomewhere in his writings, affirmed, that it was certain that the Epiſtle written to the *Laodiceans*, was certainly loſt; in the firſt chapter of a book which he wrot afterwards, which he calls a *recognition* [*i.* a ſurvey or review] *of his Works*, he acknowledgeth that it is

2. Tim. 3, 15.

uncertain whether ſuch an Epiſtle be loſt, or indeed whether ever there was ſuch an Epiſtle or no; and cites *Chryſoſtom*, as making the matter uncertain; and beſides weighing the words in the originall, from whence the conceit of ſuch an Epiſtle
Col 4 first came, he findes no ground for it in them. Onely he affirms it to be more certain, that an Epiſtle written by *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, is loſt. But 1. Suppoſe it ſhall be granted, that an Epiſtle written by *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, is loſt; yet it doth not follow from hence, that any part of the Scriptures, *i.* of thoſe writings which God intended for the perpetuall uſe of his Church; or which were ever reckoned by the Church of God amongſt the Scriptures, is loſt. For it is very poſſible, that neither all which the Prophets wrote, nor whatſoerer the Apoſtles wrote upon any occaſion whatſoever, might be Scripture (in either of theſe ſences) no, nor yet of any more inſpiration from heaven, then thoſe letters were, which *David* wrote to *Joab*, and ſent by *Uriah*; or then *Peters* practiſe was, for which *Paul reprooved him to his face*. Yet probable it is, that neither the one, nor the other of them (I mean, neither Prophet, nor Apoſtle) wrote much, but what well became men of that ſpeciall intereſt in, and acquaintance with God, which was their crown; but that whatſoever they wrot, was of equall authority, or by any order from God, to be alike imbodied with, or moulded into the Scriptures; hath nothing at all in it ſo much as to invite the belief of a conſidering man. But 2. *Chryſoſtem* and the Greek expoſitours, underſtand that expreſſion of the Apoſtle, *I Wrot unto you* ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, *in an Epiſtle* (as we read it) as if he ſaid, ἐν ταύτῃ ἐπιστολῇ, in this
1. Cor. 5, 9. Epiſtle; having a little before commanded them to *caſt out the inceſtuous* perſon from amongſt them. Therefore

4. And laſtly, concerning thoſe books mentioned, in the old Teſtament, as the book of the Prophet *Nathan*, of *Gad the Seer*, the *Prophecie of Ahijah the Shilonite*, &c. There is no reaſonable (much leſſe any neceſſary) ground, to judge any of them ever to have had the image or ſuperſcription of Scripture authority upon them, unleſſe (hapily) we ſhall judge concerning ſome of them (as ſome judicious and learned men doe) that they are, either in whole, or in part, ſome of thoſe books,

books, which are yet extant, and generally acknowledged by us, for genuine members of Scripture. As for example; some conceive, that by the *books of Nathan the Prophet, and Gad the Seer*, is meant nothing else, but such particulars concerning *David* and his affairs, which are inserted in the books of *Samuel*, and of the *Kings*, and were drawn up in writing by those Prophets, who had certain knowledge of the truth of them, as being contemporary with *David*. Others think that the whole second book of *Samuel*, with part of the first (*viz.* from the beginning of *chap* 25. where *Samuels* death is recorded) as likewise the former book of the *Kings*, were penned by these two holy men, *Nathan*, and *Gad*, and are therefore called, their *books*. But whether this be so, or no, little question there is, but that whatsoever hath at any time been Scripture, is so still: and the perishing of other writings, holy and usefull in their generation, the Scriptures still remaining, cleerly argueth some such difference between the one and the other, as the delivering of Christ from under the power of death, or from seeing corruption, evinceth betweene him and other holy men, who to this day remaine in the bands and prison of death.

Thus then we see, that God hath with an high hand of providence and care, watched over the Scriptures, to keepe them from that second kind of destruction, or perishing we spake of, *viz.* from being impaired or diminished in respect of any member, or part of them.

We adde (in the 3. place,) that the same God hath with the like hand of providence and care, kept them from that 3. kind of perishing (which we also mentioned) *viz.* from being corrupted or depraved, that is, from any such alteration or change in the words, whether by transposition, pointing, or otherwise, whereby the native or proper sense of them should be impaired, or cast out, or a sense that is spurious or unsound brought in, in the stead thereof. What they spake in the first day of their nativity, in the hour wherein they came forth into the world, out of the womb of the wisdome and will of God, the same things they speake at this day also. *Paul* indeed saith, that when *he was a child, he spake as a child:*

and

and that *when he came to be a man, he put away childish things:*
1, Cor. 13. meaning, that he now spake and did like a man. Certaine it is, that the Scriptures in their deepest infancie, *spake* neither as *children*, nor *like men*. but like God, and now they are grown to the maturity of many generations, they have not *put away* their divine things; they do not speake either like children, or like men. Looke what treasures of wisdome and knowledge they brought at first out of the bosome of God with them, the same they present and hold forth unto the world at this day. God hath suffered no man to rob them of their silver, or to give them tinne or drosse in stead of it. The words they now speak, are the same spirit and life, which they spake in the beginning. It is true the holy God did not guide all the pens of the *Transcribers* of the Scriptures, with the same heavenly infallibleness, with which he guided the pens and tongues of his immediate secretaries, who tooke and wrote them from his mouth. This appears from that variety and difference of readings, which is found in some words, between copy and copy; which difference of reading, proceeded either from the ignorance or negligence, or (perhaps) from a worse principle sometimes in those, who were imployed to transcribe them. For as we have a common saying, that *the greatest Clerkes, are not allwaies the wisest men*; so neither are the best penmen (I meane in point of faire writing,) allwaies either the best Clerks, or the most carefull and circumspect men; nor yet the freest from corruption. So that men of this faculty being heretofore (as is most probable) chiefly imployed in writing out copies of the Scriptures, they might easily mistake, one in one word, or in one place, and another in another, and so manuscripts, and copies came to differ one from another in some things. But it is one thing for God to suffer some written or printed copies of the Scriptures to erre, and to miscarry here and there; another, to suffer the import and sence of the Scriptures to be so defaced in all copies whatsoever, that the errour or mistake should be irrecoverable, either past finding out, or healing, by men of diligence and understanding. The sense and meaning of many places in Scriptures may be much obscured, and be made intricate and hard by such and such expositours commenting

commenting upon them. Yet this doth not hinder, but that the true and cleer ſence and meaning of theſe places may be attained by conſulting with other expoſitours upon the places; or by a diligent inquiring into, and comparing the Scriptures themſelves. In like manner, poſſibly the true and native ſence of a Scripture, may thorow a miſtake, want, or redundancy of a word in a falſe copy, be paſt finding out, in reſpect of any light which the place miſtaken affordeth thereunto; yet what by the help of other copies or readings, where there is no ſuch miſtake, what by the ſeries and carriage of the context, either before or after the place, or both, and what by the diligent pondering and comparing other Scriptures with it, the dead may be raiſed to life again; the ſence (I mean) of this Scripture, which (like men) was loſt one way, may be reſtored and ſaved by another. And in this ſence onely we deſire to be underſtood, when we affirm, that God hath preſerved the Scriptures, as well in the integrity and truth of their ſence and meaning; as of their parts and members. Nor can any man reaſonably here object and ſay, But how do I know, when copies, or readings differ, which is the genuine and true, and which the falſe? If the difference be materiall and weighty, the truth between them is ſo much the more eaſie to be found. For as it is in the objects of the outward ſenſes, look how much the more any of them have *de ratione objecti*, of that quality or property which makes them the objects of ſuch, or ſuch a ſence, ſo much the more eaſily they are diſcerned; as the more viſibility any thing hath in it, it is ſo much the more eaſie to be ſeen; and ſo in the reſt: ſo is it alſo in the two objects of the underſtanding, truth and errours (eſpecially in matters of Religion.) The greater, and more weighty any truth is, the more intelligibleneſſe it hath in it (which is that that maketh it the object of the underſtanding) and ſo is more eaſily apprehended; and for the ſame reaſon, the greater or broader an errour is, it is ſo much the more readily diſcovered. If the difference be light, and leſſe conſiderable, though it may be ſo much the greater difficulty to finde on which hand the truth lieth, yet it is ſo much the more like that there is no ſimple or direct errour aſſerted on either hand; but only that there is an

uncertainty of the true ſence and meaning of the holy Ghoſt in that particular place. Now in caſe God ſhould preſerve all and every the particular truths contained in the Scriptures, that none of theſe be loſt; though true expoſitions and meanings of particular places ſhould fail us never ſo much, or be inacceſſible to our underſtandings, yet God may be ſaid to preſerve the Scriptures pure and incorrupted. Yea though many of the truths contained in the Scriptures, were not (for the preſent) ſtirring, or on foot in all the world (which I am very confident is the caſe of many of them at this day) yea and though the true ſenſe and meaning of many places in the Scriptures, were not extant in all the world (which I beleeve to be as true, as the other) yet may God be truly ſaid to have preſerved the Scriptures from corruption, in caſe the letter of the Scripture be ſo preſerved, that all the truths contained at firſt, or at any time, in the Scriptures, may in a rationall way, and without miracle, be found and drawn out by men. And this is that which we have now under aſſertion and conſideration; *viz.* that God hath watched with that tender eye of providence over the letter of the Scriptures, that there was no truth deducible from thence at the firſt coming of them into the world, but that by an equall light of underſtanding, and conjunction with a like hand of diligence, and a like meaſure of aſſiſtance from God, may be alſo deduced from them at this day.

If you ask me, but how doth this appear? I anſwer;

1. (As before) It is evident that in the daies of our Saviour on earth (as likewiſe in the daies of his Apoſtles after him) there had been no violence offered to the Scriptures in that kinde we ſpeak of, there had been no falſifying of the letter of them. He that had ſo much to doe with the Scribes, Phariſees, Sadduces, and expounders of the law (yea and with the reſt of the Jewiſh nation) who muſt needs have been the polutours of the Scriptures, if any thing in this kinde had befallen them; and found ſo many corruptions and ſinnes amongſt them otherwiſe, yea and remembred them again and again, of the ſinnes of their forefathers; doubtleſſe would not have gratified ſuch a ſinne as this (forgery, or falſification in the records

records of heaven) with ſilence, if they had been guilty of it. Nay he was ſo farre from charging, either them, or any others, with falſifying, or corrupting the Scriptures, that he ſends them to them, to ſeek for him there; profeſſing, that they gave teſtimony unto him. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternall life: and they are they which teſtifie of me.* Joh.5.39. And the Apoſtle *Paul* ſeverall years after this, called the Scriptures *holy*, and θεόπνευστος, which though we reade it, *given by divine inſpiration*, yet it relates rather to the preſent conſtitution and ſpirit of them, then to the origination of them; And the place would be read thus, *All Scripture*, or, every Scripture, *is divinely inſpired*, full of the ſpirit of God: and beſides this, he commends them highly from thoſe glorious effects and ſervices, which they were fitted and every waies furniſhed to produce, and doe for the world. Therefore certainly they were not prophaned, or polluted then. 2 Tim.3.

2. The Jews (as we heard before out of *Philo*) were ſo zealous above meaſure in preſerving the letter of their Scriptures, that *there was none of them but would rather die an hundred times over, then ſuffer that to be changed in the leaſt.* Joh.5. And ſince (as the Scripture teſtifies of them) that they *thought they had eternall life* in theſe Scriptures, hoped to be everlaſtingly bleſſed and made happy by them, it cannot reaſonably be imagined, but that they ſhould be tranſcendently zealous and reſolved, even unto death, to maintain the truth and purity of them. *Will a man rob his God* (ſaith God himſelf by his Prophet) ſo that till the daies of Chriſt, and during the times of the Apoſtles, there is no colour to imagine, or ſuſpect, that the Scriptures, which then were, were any waies falſified or corrupted. Mal.3.8.

Let us come briefly to conſider, whether there be any likelyhood or ground of fear, in the leaſt, that they ſhould be corrupted afterwards, ſince the times of Chriſt, and of the Apoſtles. And firſt, for the ſpace of about four hundred years next after Chriſt, till the times of *Hierome* and *Auguſtin* (who were contemporaries for ſome part of their time) that the Scriptures had ſuffered no diſturbance or loſſe, in that kinde we now ſpeak of (I mean to the damage or prejudice of the

sence and meaning in any part, or place of them) you may receive satisfaction from these substantiall and grave authours themselves. *Hierom*, writing upon the sixt of *Isaiah*, and taking occasion to observe, from a passage there often cited in the new Testament, how that many testimonies alledged by our Saviour and his Apostles, were found in the old Testament without any variation or change, from hence reasons thus. *If any man shall say, that after the coming of Christ, and the Preaching of the Apostles, the Hebrew books were falsified, I can hardly forbear laughter, that our Saviour, his Apostles, and the Evangelists, should so cite and produce testimonies from the Scriptures, as the Jews were to falsifie them afterwards.* In which place he cites *Origen* also, making the same conceit, as ridiculous, as he himself did. And *Augustin* in his fifteenth book, *de civ. dei* c.13. argues to the same point thus. *It is not to be beleeved, that the nation of the Jews, so farre scattered and dispersed some from others, should conspire together in the same designe of writing a falshood; or that envying the authority of the Scriptures unto others, they should deprive themselves, and their posterities, of the truth of them.* And concludes: Farre be it from any wise man to beleeve or think, that any Jew, or Jews, though never so perverse, mischievous or malicious, could have any such power over so many books, especially being so scattered and dispersed in all parts of the world. The same reason (saith *Vives*, upon that place of *Austin*) holds good against those, who [at this day] to make men beleeve that the truth of Religion cannot be drawn out of the originall fountain of the Scriptures [that so they may honour the Roman translation the more] object, either that the Scriptures of the old Testament are falsified by the *Jews*, or the Scriptures of the new Testament, by the *Grecians*. When the profession of Christianity was once scattered farre and neer up and down the world from East to West, and North to South, and copies of the Scriptures both old and new Testament dispersed accordingly, it was next to an impossibility, that there should be an universall consent of all Christians, that had copies of the Scriptures, to agree together, to have them all falsified, and that alike, in the same places, and with the same falsifications: and except this be supposed to

*Ergo siquis dixerit, post adventum Christi, & prædicationem Apostolorum libros Ebræos fuisse falsatos, risum tenere non potero, ut salvator, & Apostoli, & Evangelistæ, ita testimonia protulerint, sicut à Iudæis falsandi erant. Incredibile est, Iudæorum gentem, tam longè latéq; diffusam, uno consilio conspirare potuisse in conscribendo mendacio: & dum alijs invideant authoritatem, sibi abstuliſse veritatem.*

*Absit ut prudens quispiam, vel Iudæos cujuslibet perversitatis atque malitiæ, tantum potuisse credat in codicibus tam multis, & tam longè latéq; dispersis.*

to have been done, the concluſion which we are now labouring to eſtabliſh, will ſtand ſtrong, *viz.* that God hath by a great and gracious hand of providence, protected the Scriptures ſo, that no jot or tittle of the native ſence and import of them is periſhed, but that it is in ſome tranſcript, or other to be found. We ſhewed you before, how, when copies or readings differ, that which is true and uncorrupted, may be diſcerned from the others.

Beſides, that the originalls of the old Teſtament (in which the ſubſtance of the new is contained; as the ſubſtance of the old likewiſe, is comprehended in the new) are extant in their genuine and native integrity at this day, there is this argument full of proof and conviction. If ſo be the Jews ſhall be ſuppoſed to have corrupted or falſified their Scriptures (the Scriptures of the old Teſtament) it muſt in reaſon be ſuppoſed, that they have, either only, or principally falſified them in ſuch places and paſſages, where they moſt favour and countenance Chriſtian Religion, and ſeem to give teſtimony to *Jeſus* the ſon of the Virgin *Mary*, as the true and great Meſſiah, or the like; it cannot be imagined, why, or to what purpoſe they ſhould falſifie them, but only to defeat *Chriſtians*, and the aſſertours of *Chriſtian* Religion, of ſuch weapons for the defence of their Religion againſt them, which they have been wont to fetch out of their armoury (I mean, their Scriptures, the old Teſtament.) But that they have not falſified them in ſuch places as theſe, is evident by this conſideration; becauſe the Hebrew text, as it ſtandeth, and ſpeaketh at this day, uttereth it ſelf in ſome places more emphatically, with more vigour and pregnancy of expreſſion for *Chriſtian* Religion, and for *Jeſus Chriſts* being the *Meſſiah*, then either the *Greek* or *Latine* tranſlations themſelves doe. Take one brief inſtance inſtead of more, *Pſal.*2. where the Greek tranſlation reads, *Take hold of inſtruction*, or diſcipline, the *Hebrew* hath it (as our Engliſh tranſlation preſenteth it) *Kiſſe the Son.* Now this reading comports much better with the faith and doctrine of *Chriſtians* touching the *Meſſiah*, whom they beleeve to be the Sonne of God, then that other reading of the *Septuagint* doth. All which duly conſidered, that conceit of ſome Papiſts, Pſal. 2. 12.

to entitle the authority of the Church of *Rome* to a divine intereſt or right, that there ſhould be a generall confluence and meeting of the Jews from all nations under heaven in the City of *Tiberias*, about four hundred and fourſcore years after *Chriſt*; and that there, out of their hatred to *Chriſtians*, and *Chriſtian* Religion, they ſhould combine and agree together to falſifie their Scriptures, *&c.* This conceit (I ſay) is ridiculouſly weak, and hath neither ſubſtance, nor colour, of truth in it; and hath been confuted, hand and foot, ruſh and branch, by Proteſtant writers. Yea there are not wanting among themſelves, men of ſo much wiſdom and ingenuity together, as to diſclaim all part and fellowſhip with that conceit, and to aſſert an indubitable purity in the *Hebrew* text, any thing that ever was attempted to corrupt it, notwithſtanding. Yea that great, learned, and famous man amongſt them, *Arias Montanus*, looks upon that convention of the Jews at *Tiberias*, not as many of his fellows look upon it, *viz.* as a meeting intended for, and managed to, the corruption of the Hebrew Scriptures; but as a meeting providentially diſpoſed by God (and no otherwiſe either intended, or managed by thoſe themſelves that met) for the preſervation, and perpetuall ſecurity of the Hebrew fountains of Scripture from corruption. But

3. (And laſtly) That there is nothing diſturbed, nothing perverted, nothing corrupted of the ſence and import of the Scriptures, or (at moſt) nothing conſiderable; this conſideration is to me, inſtead of, and above, all other demonſtrations; that whereas all things contained, and at this day held forth in the Scriptures (yea all things that can reaſonably be imagined ſhould be contained in the Scriptures) relate unto one of theſe two things, faith, or manners; thoſe things which the Scriptures now hold forth and ſpeak, either in the one relation, or the other, are of that efficacious, ſatisfactory, divine and heavenly importance, that whoever ſhall narrowly and impartially conſider hereof, will ſoon be lifted up by the ſpirit of his contemplation above all ſuſpitions or jealouſies, that any creature, much leſſe, any unworthy or wicked man, or men, hath had to doe in the moulding, framing, ordering, or

fashioning

faſhioning of any thing there. There are, for matters of faith, and what is to be beleeved, myſteries ſo tranſcendently glorious and beautifull, of ſuch a bleſſed aſpect to take, pleaſe, ſatiſfie, and raviſh the hearts, and ſouls, and conſciences of men, that a due apprehenſion or right underſtanding of them, cannot but deliver a man out of the hand of every ſurmiſe and fear, that man, yea or any creature, ſhould have been the contrivers of them. A man may as well, and with as much reaſon, and upon as good grounds, affirm, that ſome ſmith or founder, took a great ball of iron, or braſſe, red hot, or flaming out of a furnace, lifted it up with his arme, and put it into the heavens, and ſo made the ſun, as ſay or think, that a man had any thing to doe in framing the glorious Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt, who is the image of God*, even as now it is repreſented, and appears in the Scriptures. And in caſe the world were as wiſe as it ſhould, and might be, by the means vouchſafed unto it by God for ſuch a purpoſe, he that ſhould ſay, there is any thing of men in that myſtery of faith, which the Goſpel holds forth and ſhews unto the world, would render himſelf a man of weakneſſe, *one of a thouſand* in ignorance and ſimplicity unto it. And ſo for that other kinde of materiall in the Scriptures, ſuch things (I mean) as relate to manners, and matter of life and converſation, theſe are raiſed to that height and pitch of excellencie and perfection, that it is not lightly (indeed, not poſſibly) incident to the thoughts or apprehenſions of adviſed men, and throughly ſeen in all the particulars, once to imagine, that ſuch principles, rules, and precepts of action, ſhould ever have proceeded from a ſinfull man.

If any man deſires to know when, or at what time, the ſeverall pieces or books of Scripture came to be added to the reſt of the body of them; though I doe not conceive the knowledge hereof would be much beneficiall unto men, eſpecially conſidering that God himſelf hath not thought the revealing of ſuch a thing, worthy his ſpirit, nor neceſſary to the perfecting of the Saints, and fitting them for their glory; yet the beſt and the only way I know for men of this deſire to purchaſe ſatisfaction (the beſt that is to be had) is to conſult with chronologers, a principall part of whoſe work and undertaking

taking is, to finde out and discover, when, and in what age or year of the world, men that have any waies been famous, and amongst the rest, the ancient Prophets and pen-men of the Scriptures, Christ, and his Apostles, when they flourished, lived, and died. It is most probable, that the men who received the severall revelations from God contained in the respective books of the Scriptures, did withall receive speciall order and direction from him to set down in writing, what they had by way of revelation communicated unto them, and withall, to present them unto his Church, or the chief head and governour thereof, in his name, as a further inlargement of, or addition unto, those sacred records, which he had purposed to make a perpetuall and standing treasury of divine light and knowledge for his Church, in all succeeding generations. And this also may serve to resolve another question, which some may possibly ask, *viz* how, or upon what ground, or by what authority, those books, which are now generally received and looked upon as so many parts of the sacred Canon, or Scripture, came to have part and fellowship in this honour, so many others, for ought is known to the contrary, of equall worth, and possibly given by the same inspiration, being laid aside, and not taken into this account. For though I doe not know any particular ground in the Scriptures themselves, on which to frame a positive and direct answer to this question: yet 1. most probable it is, that the persons whom God made choice of, to be his Secretaries and pen-men, to receive and put down in writing those sacred dictates of the holy Ghost, which he intended for Scripture, had not only an order and command from him, to tender in his name what they had written from his mouth in this kinde, unto his Church and people, as that which his will was should be added to his book (which we call the Scriptures) but were further enabled by him, though not alwaies perhaps with a guift of working miracles, as *Moses* was, yet in one kinde, and by one means or other, to convince and give satisfaction unto the Church of God, that God indeed had appeared unto them, and that what they did, in offering unto them what they had written, to be accepted as part of the divine Oracles, they did by speciall warrant and injunction

injunction from God. And 2. that compleatneſſe and intireneſſe of the Scriptures, that ſame all-ſufficiency in them for all holy ends and purpoſes whatſoever, which we formerly argued and proved, is a rationall and cleer demonſtration, 1. That thoſe writings which are now generally received and acknowledged in the name of the Scriptures, are from God. 2. That there needs no further addition to be made unto them by any other immediate or extraordinary revelation from God: and conſequently (in the third place) that if there were any other pieces of divine revelation, beſides thoſe, which now being joined together make up the body, or volume of the Scriptures, yet it was never any part of the will or pleaſure of God, that any of them ſhould partake in this glory, with the other.

And thus I have done with the firſt demonſtration, taken from amongſt the great and famous acts of the Providence of God, to prove that the Scriptures are from God, *viz.* that ſtrange and high hand of protection which he hath held over them throughout all generations, farre above the rate of what he hath done in this kinde, for any other book, or writing, or doctrine, in the world. I have ſtood ſomewhat the longer upon the opening of it, becauſe being duly conſidered in the compaſſe and extent, and all the particulars of it, I judge it to be an argument of that potent conviction, that it cannot (lightly) but on the one hand ſatisfie a conſcience that is ſcrupulous, and on the other hand ſcruple a conſcience that is obdurate, and bent againſt the divine originall of the Scriptures.

My ſecond demonſtration propounded under the former head, was this; the high hand of ſucceſſe, wherewith the Goſpel, even in the infancy of it, and ſoon after it firſt went forth into the world, was attended; the mighty and marveilous prevailings of it, where ever it came, notwithſtanding the many, and great diſadvantages, which it was to encounter, and overcome, before it could conquer, or ſubdue the hearts or lives of men unto it. When one of the ſpies that were ſent to view the land of *Canaan*, repreſented it, and the inhabitants of it as unconquerable, affirming, that the *people were of great*

*ſtature*, and many of them of the race of the gyants, they but *as graſhoppers* in compariſon of them, *their cities walled up unto heaven*, &c. *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, in the very face of theſe great diſcouragements replied notwithſtanding; *fear ye not the people of the land: for they are bread for us:* and ſo they were; for the Iſraelites ſoon overcame them, and fed themſelves with them, notwithſtanding the mighty arme of fleſh which they had to defend themſelves; but in the mean ſeaſon, this was a great argument and proof, that they had a farre ſtronger arme then their own to aſſiſt them. In like manner when the Goſpel went forth to conquer and ſubdue the world, all things in appearance, threatned a miſcarriage, and defeature of the attempt: the world looked big upon the Goſpel with contempt and ſcorn, ſaying to it (in effect) as the men of *Sodom* ſaid to *Lot*. *This fellow is come alone as a ſtranger, and ſhall he judge and rule?* They made account, that they being many, and he but one, and that a ſtranger, and ſo not likely to have any party among them, they ſhould doe well enough with him, to keep him under, and not to ſuffer him to have his will, and umpire amongſt them: in like manner, the world, at the firſt coming in of the Goſpel unto it, looking upon it as a ſtranger, a new and a ſtrange doctrine, that had never been taught in the world before, and conſidering how ſolitary and naked it was, deſtitute of friends and favourers, who were any waies likely, either for their number, or for their quality, to promote, or protect it; made none other account but they ſhould eaſily *binde the face of it in the duſt* (as *Job* ſpeaketh) and ſtay the courſe, and ſtop the mouth of it preſently. But all this notwithſtanding, though the oppoſitions againſt the Goſpel, and the unlikelyhoods of its ſucceſſe in the world, were of the race of *Anak*, and like unto gyants, and the hopes and means of it's prevailing but *as graſhoppers* (in compariſon) yet the world was but bread for it; all thoſe ſtrong and fiery oppoſitions which roſe up againſt it (in the Scripture phraſe) it licked them up *as ox licketh up the graſſe*, and made trophies and triumps of them. And was not *God* now *in the ſtill voice* of the Goſpel, which though like *Chriſt*, it neither *ſtrove, nor cried, nor did any man hear it lift up its voice in the ſtreet*, though

Numb 14. 9.

Gen. 19. 9.

it

it neither *brake any bruiſed reed, nor quenched any ſmoking flax*, yet did the ſoft words of it break the bones of the world; it *brought forth judgement into victory*, the little ſtrength it had notwithſtanding; *it brought forth judgement into victory. i.* it made the world at laſt to acknowledge the righteouſneſſe, equity and truth, of that cauſe of God, which it pleaded and maintained; the true *judgement* whereof was for a time, denied, oppoſed, and ſuppreſſed by the world; it triumphed over the unjuſt *judgement*, and thoſe unrighteous thoughts, wherein the world *rejoyced*, and gloried againſt it *for a ſeaſon*. And in this ſence Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to *bring forth judgement into victory*. My brethren, whilſt the ſound of theſe things is in your ears, doe not your hearts begin to burn within you, with a ſecret ſence and acknowledgement, that doubtleſſe this Goſpel, and ſo the Scriptures which hold it forth unto the world, are from God? Mat. 12. 19, 20.

But to give your ſouls and conſciences their fill in ſatisfaction (if it may be) from the conſideration and demonſtration in hand; we will in ſomewhat a more particular and diſtinct manner lay before you, 1. the great diſadvantages and unlikelyhoods of ſucceſſe, wherewith that great and glorious undertaking of the Goſpel (to ſubdue and ſubject the world unto it ſelf) was threatned to be made null, and laid in the duſt. 2. How victoriouſly, yea triumphantly notwithſtanding the Goſpel acquitted it ſelf, *ſwallowing up* all impediments, diſadvantages, enmities, oppoſitions, unlikelihods of ſucceſſe, *into victory*.

For the firſt; there are four things (in the generall) which ſeemed to threaten the Goſpel with being non-ſuted, in that great controverſie which it went forth to plead with the world; and to propheſie nothing of that high undertaking, but only that it would be like *the untimely fruit of a woman, which never ſeeth the light of the ſun*. The firſt was, the very tenour, frame and compoſure of the Goſpel it ſelf. The ſecond, the deep and deſperate oppoſition, or contrariety in the natures, hearts, and ſpirits of men againſt it. The third, the weak and contemptible arme of fleſh, which it had to aſſiſt or promote it in the world. The fourth (and laſt) that ſtrong and potent

arme of fleſh, which was every where likely to be, and for the moſt part, was, lifted up againſt it, and the proceedings of it, in the world.

For the firſt of theſe: The very frame and tenour of the Goſpel, ſeemed to propheſie that little but neglect, oppoſition, and ſcorn, did abide it, in every place where it ſhould come. Five things more eſpecially there are in the frame of the Goſpel, which thus threatned: 1. The ſoreneſſe and grievouſneſſe of many (and thoſe the main and principall) commands, or injunctions of it. 2. The great unlikelihood of truth or certainty in the promiſes, which ſhould ballance thoſe commands, and make the yoke of them any whit tolerable; the unlikelihood I ſay of truth or certainty in theſe promiſes, according to what fleſh and bloud is likely to judge in ſuch a caſe. 3. The unlikelihood (according to the ſame judgement) that thoſe ſore and terrible threatnings ſhould ever be put in execution, with which diſobedience to the commands of the Goſpel, is charged and threatned. 4. Thoſe frequent abaſings and viliſications wherein the Goſpel utters and declares it ſelf ever and anon, againſt the excellent and honourable things (ſo called, and eſteemed) in the world. 5. (And laſtly) thoſe ſeeming contradictions in the Goſpel, by reaſon whereof it ſeems to make warre againſt it ſelf, and its own acceptation, with reaſonable and conſidering men. Theſe particulars in the frame of the Goſpel, ſeemed, to *write it childleſſe*, and a doctrine that was *not* like *to proſper* in the daies thereof. Let us weigh theſe particulars a little.

Firſt, For the commands, and ſolemn injunctions of the Goſpel, theſe are like *Pauls* Epiſtles (as ſome repreſented them) *ſore* and high; they require ſuch things, which are importunely unreaſonable, in the ſence *of fleſh and bloud*, to be demanded of men: they require of men *the one half*, yea the whole *of* thoſe *Kingdoms* of eaſe, pleaſures, honours, riches and injoiments in every kinde, which they have gotten (it may be) with *the ſweat of their brows*, and are fully poſſeſſed of in the world; they require of men to *forſake houſes, and lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and ſiſters, yea and their own lives too*, to expoſe themſelves to the hatred, ſcorne, violence, contempt, and

and indignation of the world. Now what extream hard sayings are these to *flesh and bloud?* was it like that the delicate sons, and daughters of the pleasures and delights of this world, would bear them? So again, we know they command the *wise men of the World*, and all those that are such in their own eies, to *become fools*, and to beleeve many strange and unheard of positions and conclusions, marvellously improbable, yea incredible, till after much debate, consideration, and inquiry; from which too the very face, and first appearance of the incredibleness of the things, seem to discourage them; as to beleeve, that God was made man, was born of a virgin, suffered those indignities of being reproached and reviled, spitted on in the face, buffeted, scourged, crucified at last on a crosse between two notorious malefactours, as a greater malefactour then they, with the like? The Gospel injoyning wise, sober, grave, learned, acute men, to subject their judgements to such notions and opinions as these, seems to command them out of their senses, wits, reasons, judgements, understandings, and to leave them nothing of men in them. So again; when it commands them, that *When they are smitten on the one cheek, to turn the other also*, when their *coat is taken* from them, to suffer him that takes that, *to take their cloak too*; to *love their enemies*, to forgive injuries, to *pray for those that persecute them*, &c. they are apt to imagine, that it had as good (in plain terms) command them to turn fools, or to imagine themselves stocks or stones. This then is one ingredient in the composition of the Gospel, which seems so to imbitter it to the taste of the world, that it would never be digested, nor down with men. And yet we shall see that even such commands and injunctions as these, notwithstanding the harshness, sournes, and offensivenes of them unto *flesh and bloud*, were taken down, and digested by many thousands in the world; yea *the Gospel ran and was glorified*, these notwithstanding.

Secondly, Another ingredient in the frame of the Gospel, which was like to set off the world at as great a distance as might be, from imbracing it (especially considered and compared with the former, the offensiveness of the commands) is the tenour and strain of the promises thereof, especially the great

and main promiſes; which are they that muſt ballance, and weigh againſt the commands, and heal the offenſiveneſſe of theſe, if ever the Goſpel be received by men. Theſe promiſes may very poſſibly ſeem in the eyes of carnall men, to be (in *Peters* phraſe) but *ſwelling Words of vanity*, and to have but little *ſpirit* or *life* of truth, or certainty in them. As 1. That great promiſe of juſtification in the ſight of God, unto thoſe that beleeve, upon which all the other promiſes are made to depend; how is the truth of this incumbred and overſhadowed with ſuch difficulties or objections, which in the eye of reaſon, exerciſed only in the Theories, debates and diſputes of naturall things, and the things of this world, are apt to make the promiſe it ſelf, not ſo much a matter of *doubtfull diſputation*, as of preſent rejection? For 1. That he that is a ſinner, ſhould be made righteous, or innocent at all: or 2. that he that is known to be a ſinner, ſhould be judged and pronounced righteous, or juſt, by a judge of infinite juſtice, and impartiality: or 3. that one man ſhould be made righteous or juſt, by the doings or ſufferings of another; or 4. that many thouſands ſhould be made righteous or juſt, by the doings or ſufferings of one; or 5. that ſuch a juſtification as this, which is obtained by the worth or merit of the doings or ſufferings of another; ſhould be attended with ſuch a glorious and royall retinue of bleſſings, and favours, and great things from God, as to be made his ſons and daughters by adoption, to be freed from the *vengeance of eternall fire*, which ſhall be poured out upon all the world beſides, to be raiſed from the dead, to have *their vile bodies* made excellently glorious, to wear crowns, and to have Kingdomes given unto them (with the like) which are things incredible enough in themſelves, ſimply conſidered; and much more incredible, when they are aſſerted to ſpring from ſuch a root, as the juſtification mentioned is: 6. That only faith, the alone belief of a ſaying reported to come from the mouth of God, ſhould intereſſe a man in ſuch a juſtification, which is attended with ſo many tranſcendencies of bleſſednes and glory, as were mentioned, yea and many more (all which as we know, are comprehended in the promiſe of juſtification, as it ſtands in the Goſpel) all theſe great and ſtrange things (I

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ſay) ſtanding round about the great promiſe of juſtification in the Goſpel, makes it ſeem rather (in the eye of the common underſtandings of men) as ſome great King or perſon of honour repreſented on a ſtage, then as a promiſe of ſoberneſſe and truth. The promiſe of the reſurrection, ſeemed rather matter of laughter, then of conſideration (much leſſe of belief) to Philoſophers themſelves; yea to thoſe of the moſt ſtrict and ſerious ſect amongſt them (I mean the *Steiques* [a]) yea the *Saddnces* alſo, a ſect of men profeſſing a knowledge more then ordinary in things appertaining unto God, among the Jews, made little better account of it [b]. And (that which is more then all this) ſome Chriſtians and beleevers themſelves, who for a ſeaſon had rejoyced under the belief of it, afterwards looking (as it ſeems) too narrowly with a carnall eye upon the improbability of it, took a diſlike of their own belief in this kinde, and reverſed it [c]. The promiſe of having *our vile bodies changed, and made like unto the glorious body of Jeſus Chriſt* [d], weigheth yet ſome grains more in an unlikelihood of performance, then that of the reſurrection. It were eaſie to give inſtance in many others, as obnoxious to diſparagement and contempt from naturall men, as theſe.

[a] Act. 17 18. 22. 26. 8.

[b] Mat 22. 23.

[c] 1 Cor 15. 12.

[d] Philip 3. 21.

A third particular in the very frame and temper of the Goſpel, which might ſeem in the eye of fleſh and bloud to propheſie little but rejection or contempt unto it, on every ſide, inſtead of a prevailing upon, and over, the world, was the nature of the threatnings, whereby it ſeeks to terrifie all the enemies thereof, and thoſe that ſhall oppoſe, or reject it. It threatens ſuch with being caſt *into utter darkneſſe*, where there ſhall be *weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth*; with *the worm that never dieth*, with *fire that is unquenchable*, or, that never goeth out, *with a bottomleſſe pit*, &c. Now the incredibleneſſe of ſuch threatnings as theſe, and the unlikelihood that ever they ſhould be put in execution, ariſeth from two things: partly from the main occaſion or ground inſiſted upon in the Goſpel, why they ſhould be executed upon men, why men ſhould be ſo puniſhed, as the threatnings import; partly alſo from the nature, kinde or quality of the threatnings or puniſhments themſelves. To begin with this latter; the nature

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or kinde of theſe threatnings is ſuch, that to thoſe, who are wont to *judge according to appearance onely* (which is a calamity very incident to fleſh and bloud) they ſeem rather like unto the Poeticall figments, of ſuch puniſhments, as they appropriate to their grand malefactours in hell; as to *Siſyphus* his ſtone, *Tantalus* his apples, *Titius* his vulture, *&c.* which are reported and aſſerted by them, not ſo much to terrifie the conſciences of men from evil, as to take the fancies of men with pleaſure and delight in the reading of them; I ſay the threatnings of the Goſpel, to men that are apt to *judge according to appearance* of things, are more like unto ſuch fables as theſe, then unto any thing uttered by the mouth of the living God, or which is any waies like ever to be really performed. Now there are three things more particularly conſiderable, in, and about the nature, quality, or kinde of the Goſpel threatnings, which with men (as was ſaid) were like to make them of no authority or effect. The firſt is, the greatneſſe of them. Secondly, the ſtrangeneſſe of them. Thirdly (and laſtly) the proportion or agreement which they have (though it be not much) with thoſe poeticall and figmentitious puniſhments which we ſpake of.

Jer 5.11,12. Zeph. 3.5.

For the firſt, The puniſhments threatned in the Goſpel, are ſo above meaſure exceeding great and inſupportable (in caſe they were executed) that men can hardly beleeve, that God being ſo full of love and goodneſſe and mercy (as mens thoughts generally ſuggeſt him to be) ſhould ever deal ſo ſeverely with his poor creature, the work of his own hands, as theſe threatnings import (eſpecially for ſo ſmall an overſight, or miſcarriage, as the non-belief, or neglect of the Goſpel, as we ſhall ſee preſently.) It is a generall rule, that, *Tarda ſolet magnis rebus ineſſe fides.* ——Reports of great things in their kinde, are hard to be beleeved. And this is one thing which (as heretofore upon occaſion notice hath been given unto you) that makes the promiſes of the Goſpel ſo hard to be beleeved; I mean the greatneſſe of them. But reports of great things to be done and inflicted by God, by way of judgement upon men, have ſtill found oppoſition and rejection, in way of unbelief, from men; yea and this from men, who were the people of God,

God, and had his Prophets and ordinances, and the ministry of his word amongst them. See *Jeremiah* 5.11.12.13. *Zeph.* 3.5.

2. The threatnings, or the punishments threatned in the Gospel, are strange or new, as well as great: and this being in conjunction with the other, is apt to harden the hearts of men with unbelief against them so much the more. *The Worm that never dieth, and the fire that never goeth out, and the pit that hath no bottome,* &c. are new, and strange names of punishments unto men; and are more like in the asserting or preaching of them, to please mens humours, in the nature of news, or novelty; then to shake their consciences with fear of enduring them.

3. (And lastly) that proportion or agreement, which these punishments threatned in the Gospel have, or might seem to have, which those infernall punishments, which the Poets generally asserted in their fabulous relations, and which the world had been a long time accustomed to despise, save only for mirth and vain delight sake (for the Poets themselves, when they were serious, professed that they did not beleeve their own doctrines in this kinde) this agreement (I say) as little as it is or was, might well be a preparation, as it were, unto the world, to despise the threatnings of the Gospel, when they shall come amongst them. And (haply) *Satan* inspired his Prophets (the Poets) with such notions of punishments in hell, as were mentioned, that so he might harden the world (I mean the consciences of men) against the fear of those punishments after this life, which the Gospel threatens against those that are the despisers of it. For (as we have had both lately and heretofore, occasion to observe) the devil secretly perswadeth, and teacheth his instruments and agents in the world, both to teach and doe, such things, as Jesus Christ himself and his members, and agents, have taught, and done; that so the world may be pusled, as it were, and at a losse to distinguish and know the one from the other, or otherwise be induced thorow the difficulty of discerning, to reject both the one and the other. And *Satan* comes to a fair market indeed, if he can but procure the things of *Jesus Christ* to be cast out of the

mindes, and cares, and thoughts of men, though his own things be cast out with them. But the truth is, that if the things of *Jesus Christ* be neglected, or cast off by men, though some particular tenets, or practises of *Satan* may possibly be cast off with them, yet the principall things of *Satan* are retained and owned: For that which *Satan* mainly intends and drives at in all his temptations, suggestions and insinuations with men, is to allure and draw them into a contempt, or neglect of the things of *Jesus Christ*; and if he can but get a mans foot into this snare of death, it troubles him not much though he abhors all other religions besides; his maxime in this case is, that of tyrants; *Pereant amici, dummodò & unà inimici pereant.* So that Christian Religion, which is his enemie, may but down; he cares not though all other Religions, all false and idolatrous Religions in the world, which are his friends, should down with it. But this by the way. Thus then ye see there are three things considerable in the very tenour and frame of the Gospel threatnings, which rendred them very obnoxious to contempt, and neglect from men.

Adde hereunto (in the second place) the slenderness of the occasion (as it is apt to seem in the eyes of flesh and bloud) upon which the Gospel threatnings (according to the constant assertion thereof) are to be put in execution upon men; and this will seem to disable the authority and credit of them yet much more. We know the Gospel makes the sinne of unbelief, if not the only cause of bringing *the vengeance of eternall fire*, and all the rest of the fearfull threatnings of the Gospel upon men, yet a very great and main cause hereof, yea from place to place it makes it the cause *sine quâ non* (as they call) the cause without which, these threatnings shall not be executed upon any man, for any other cause, or causes, reason, or reasons, sinne, or sinnes, whatsoever. Now that God, being so lovingly and graciously inclined unto his creature, as to be ready to forgive him all the rest of his sinnes how many in number, how grievous in nature soever; yea and not only this, but also to conferre upon him a crown of blessednesse and glory, only upon condition that he beleeve the Gospel; that such a God (I say) should for, or by reason of,

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the neglect of ſuch a ſmall ſervice as this, execute *the vengeance of eternall fire* upon his creature, and make him everlaſtingly miſerable, and that to the height and extremity of what he is able to ſuffer or endure, in miſery, is a ſaying not like to finde entertainment in the hearts or thoughts of men. Unbelief of the Goſpel, certainly was a new, and ſtrange kinde of ſinne to the world, when it was firſt ſo called and aſſerted by the Miniſters of the Goſpel; it was a ſinne which men had not heard of till then: Therefore to make this the great condemning ſinne of the world; or any ſuch provocation in the ſight of God, that becauſe of it he ſhould bring all mens other ſinnes upon their heads in everlaſting torments and miſeries, ſeems in the eyes of naturall men, to be a ſaying no waies worthy to be received, except it be with rebuke, and ſcorn.

Thus you ſee of how little credit or authority, the threatnings of the Goſpel were like to prove amongſt thoſe, to whom the Goſpel was preached, when it firſt went forth into the world. Now how great a diſadvantage this was unto the Goſpel, to obtain that crown, which it ran for, which was belief, and acceptation, and ſubjection from the world, may eaſily be conceived upon theſe two conſiderations. Firſt, becauſe any part or paſſage in a relation, or report, which men ſuſpect in point of truth, is to them a ground of jealouſie that the whole is of little better conſtitution; and to be ſuſpected alſo. The Scripture proverb taketh place in this caſe alſo: *a little leven, leaveneth the whole lump.* If ſo be the threatnings in the Goſpel, be, either in their nature, or in reſpect of the occaſion upon which the execution of them is aſſerted, or upon what ground ſoever, of little or no authority or credit with men, they muſt needs incumber and prejudice the authority of the Goſpel in all other the parts and carriages of it. Secondly, the threatnings wherewith the Goſpel is armed againſt all the deſpiſers and neglecters of it, is one part, and that not the leaſt conſiderable, of that ſtrength which it hath, and claims to have, whereby to make its way, and to awaken the conſciences of men, to hearken unto the promiſes of it, and to conſider and to inquire after the truth of them. Some talk much of legall preparations, and being humbled by the

law; but the Goſpel hath other manner of inſtruments or engines for the work of humiliation, to ſhake the proud and ſecure hearts and conſciences of men with fear and trembling, then the law hath any (as ſome years ſince upon occaſion, we ſhewed more at large, in the hearing of ſome of you.) The threatnings of the Goſpel, which are to follow in the reer of the *great and precious promiſes* thereof, and to cauſe the deſpiſers of them, through fear to face about, and to turn towards them (if it may be) are upon true account, and in a ſpirituall eye, full of efficacie and power that way; and conſequently, muſt needs be (as hath been ſaid) a very conſiderable part of that ſtrength, whereby the Goſpel was to prevail, and to raiſe up a Kingdom for it ſelf amongſt men. It is the nature and property of men yet unconverted unto God (yea and of thoſe too that are converted, in a great meaſure; as *Auſtin* long ſince obſerved) as to deſire the injoyment of things which they apprehend good for them, ſo to deſire an eſcape from things they apprehend evil, *much more*. The fear which often ſeizeth upon men of ſuffering evil, is of a more forcible operation upon them, to ingage them upon a courſe of means to eſcape it, then the love or deſire of a proportionable poſitive good, is to act them ſutably for the obtaining of it. The reaſon whereof I conceive ariſeth from the ſervile and baſe diſpoſition which is in men. Perſons of a ſlaviſh, and ſervile condition, which condition (commonly) ſoon tranſformeth the minde and ſpirit alſo *into the ſame image* (I mean of ſlaviſhneſſe and ſervility) being exerciſed and taken up with little, but with fears of being puniſhed, of what they may poſſibly ſuffer and endure, if they follow not their work the better; and having ſmall, or no hopes of obtaining any poſitive good; hence it comes to paſſe, that deſires of ſuch good as we ſpeak of, are very faint and inefficacious in them; but deſires of that negative good we mentioned, keeping their backs from ſtripes, theſe are potent and operative enough with them, in as much as they have hope by being diligent at their work, to compaſſe this. So is it with the generality of men, eſpecially whilſt they are yet meerly naturall, and carnall; when they hear of heaven, and the glory and great things of

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the world to come, on the one hand; and of hell, and damnation, and *the vengeance of eternall fire*, on the other hand; their fears of being damned in hell, doe commonly prevent and fall to work within them, before their hopes of being made glorious in heaven; yea it is very observable, that even the greatest part of those, who doe in some measure beleeve (or at least seem to doe so) manage their religious ingagements, and their course of devotions, more with an eye unto and out of a strength of desire to escape hell, or to be saved *from the wrath* and vengeance *to come*, then out of any strength of desire to lift up their heads with the Saints, or to reign with *Jesus Christ* in glory for evermore. The jaylours first question, being awakened, was, *What he should doe to be saved* (Act. 16.) And those that were pricked at the heart at *Peters* Sermon, *Act.* 2. though they did not expresse themselves altogether so farre, yet the intent of their question certainly was the same. *Men and brethren What shall We doe?* &c. *viz.* to be saved from destruction, and the wrathfull hand of God; as in part appears by *Peters* answer unto them. So now the great labour and travail of the souls of poor Christians, the perplexity and distresse that often is upon their consciences and spirits, is not formally or precisely through fear of loosing *the great recompence of reward*, the glorious benefit and blessing of heaven; but through fear of gaining the inestimable damage and misery of hell. This then is a second consideration, wherein the Gospel was much disadvantaged (as men count disadvantage) by the unlikelyhood of any reality or truth, in the threatnings thereof; and so that which otherwise could not but have been one very considerable instrument, or help to it, to magnifie it self in the hearts and consciences of men, was by this means much infeebled and disabled as to action in that kinde. Thirdly, and lastly, the unlikelihood of truth and certainty in the threatnings of the Gospel, was in another respect very disadvantagious unto it; at least in comparison of what an apparent, yea or probable truth in them, would have been. For had the threatnings been such, that they might readily or without much inquiry, have been beleeved; then would the promises also have hereby gained a good degree to be beleeved too;

Act. 16.30.

Act. 2.37.

too; and that not only upon this ground, becauſe cleerneſſe or probability of truth in one part of a relation, ſomewhat countenanceth and eaſeth the relation in ſuch other parts of it, which are ſuſpicious and doubtfull; but much more upon this (which the Goſpel it ſelf layeth as a foundation or corner ſtone of its own building) *viz.* that there is no middle condition for men or women to be adjudged, or put into by God, for eternity, but either the ſhame and torments of hell, or the everlaſting bleſſedneſſe and glory of heaven. Now of the two, ſimply conſidered, it is much more eaſie to beleeve, that God will not everlaſtingly torment his creature in hell, then that he will everlaſtingly glorifie it in heaven. So that the more credible or eaſie to be beleeved, the Goſpel threatnings concerning Gods caſting men into hell, there to endure torment for ever, for ſinne, are, by vertue of the ſaid principle, the promiſes of the Goſpel concerning the eternall ſalvation of men, muſt needs be ſo much the more eaſie to be beleeved alſo.

4. The Goſpel was much diſadvantaged as to matter of acceptance or belief in the world, from the frame of it, in regard of thoſe frequent abaſements, and vilifications of all worldly excellencies that are found in it: it poures contempt upon the head of the world, and all the glory of it; it throws down all the mountains of earthly honour, riches, pleaſures, wiſdom, and of whatſoever is called great under heaven, and fills up the valleys with them, and makes all but a levell or plain.

Gal. 3 28. It takes away all difference between *Jew and Gresian*, between *bond and free*, between *male and female*: and ſo between rich and poor, honourable, and deſpiſed, *&c.* making all to be but *one in Chriſt Jeſus*. The meaning is, that it inveſts all thoſe, without exception, who receive and ſubject themſelves unto it, in an eſtate or condition, ſo ſuper-abundantly glorious and bleſſed, that nothing, any waies relating or appertaining to their preſent condition in the world, whether on the right hand, or on the left, whether convenience, or inconvenience, priviledge, or diſ-priviledge, honour, or diſhonour, riches, or poverty, ſtrength, or weakneſſe, health, or ſickneſſe, is any waies conſiderable, or much to be regarded, in compariſon thereof. It

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is only in the time of the night, when *one ſtarre differeth from another in glory:* when the ſun ariſeth in his might, he preſently diſſolveth all thoſe diſtinctions of firſt and ſecond of fift and ſixt magnitudes between them, ſwallowing them up as it were into victory by that abundance of light, which he ſtill brings with him into the world. In like manner, the glorious Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt brings that exceſſe of bleſſednesſe and glory unto men, which drowns all conſideration and thoughts of ſuch differences in their outward eſtates and conditions, which before ſeemed to diſtinguiſh them into mountains and moulhills, into men happy, and men miſerable: even as the vaſtneſſe of the globe or body of the earth, cauſeth the *Mathematician* (who yet uſeth to be very exact and punctuall in his demonſtrations) not ſo much as to mention, or take any notice, either of the higheſt mountains, or loweſt vallyes, in his account concerning the figure of it; but pronounceth it perfectly ſphericall, or round, theſe notwithſtanding. Now Kings and Princes, and the children of the greatneſſe of this world, who (as the Scripture ſpeaketh) *make their neſts amongſt the ſtarres*, and pleaſe themſelves with their prerogative eſtates and conditions in the world, were not like to endure any ſuch doctrine or ſpirit which were ever and anon magnifying themſelves againſt their beloved intereſts, of greatneſſe, pomp, and power in the world; repreſenting alſo their perſons as miſerable, as deſpicable, as the pooreſt of men, unleſſe they ſubmitted themſelves, and all their earthly glory to the Scepter of Chriſt which was as the ſhadow of death to ſuch men. 1 Cor. 15.

5. (And laſtly) the Goſpel in reſpect of the frame of it, was like to ſuffer neglect, and rejection from the world, by reaſon of thoſe ſeeming contrarieties and croſſe paſſages, which at firſt hearing (eſpecially) ſeem to thwart, and fight one againſt another. We ſhall not need to inſtance in ſuch paſſages as theſe; we have done it formerly, once and again upon occaſion; and once (I remember) in the proſecution of the doctrine in hand. We ſhall now only in a word lay before you what diſadvantage the Goſpel was (in reaſon) like to ſuſtain, in point of acceptance with the world, in reſpect of theſe civil warres which it ſeemed to have in its own bowels,

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thoſe paſſages (I mean) which ſeem to riſe up, and to deſtroy one the other. We have a common ſaying; *mendacem memorem eſſe oportet. i.* A liar had need have a good memory, *viz.* leaſt he interfeer in his relation, and ſpeak one thing which doth not agree with another, and ſo looſeth the credit, which he deſires ſhould be given to it. For there is a *genius* or aptneſſe in the nature of man, not to beleeve any thing reported unto him by another, who is either unknown to him, or known to be a looſe ſpeaker, unleſſe he knows, at leaſt apprehends, better reaſons why he ſhould beleeve what is ſpoken by ſuch an one, then only the credit or opinion he hath of the ſpeaker. And yet much more backward and averſe are men from beleeving upon ſuch terms, when they either know, or apprehend, reaſons why they ſhould not beleeve. Now amongſt all the reaſons or grounds which a man is likely to apprehend to hinder, or take him off from beleeving, what is reported unto him, there is none generally more forcible or prevailing (eſpecially with conſidering and underſtanding men) then when that which is reported, is found, or apprehended, to be inconſiſtent with it ſelf. That of *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 10. is well known: Eccleſ. 10. 1. *Dead flies cauſeth the ointment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour: ſo doth a little folly him that is in reputation for Wiſdom and honour.* In like manner though a relation or report, hath many things in it worthy conſideration and acceptance, ſimply conſidered, yet if there be a *little* of the *folly* we ſpeak of, apprehended in it, any thing that is incongruous and inconſiſtent with its fellows, it is enough to make the ſavour of the whole relation to ſtink in the noſtrills of apprehenſive and conſidering men. How much more apt and inclinable are men to take hold even with greedineſſe, of the leaſt appearance of ſuch an exception as this, to reject ſuch a doctrine or report, which otherwiſe is burthenſome and offenſive unto them, as the Goſpel generally is unto men, who are yet but naturall and meerly carnall? Thus then we ſee under what diſadvantages the Goſpel went forth into the world, in reſpect of the very frame and conſtitution of it (and that in ſundry particulars) and how unlikely it was, in regard of theſe, to finde intertainment or belief amongſt men. This for the

first of those four disadvantages, which seemed (as was said) to threaten the Gospel with a generall repulse by the world, when it first went forth to subdue it.

The second was the deep and desperate opposition, or contrariety in the natures, in the hearts and spirits of men against it. The laws, and the precepts and injunctions of it, being all holy, spirituall, and heavenly; and the frame of mens hearts, unclean, sensuall, and earthly; there must needs be a violent antipathy, a fierce contrariety in these against it; and so much the more, because these holy, spirituall, and heavenly injunctions or laws of the Gospel, are backed, seconded, and strengthened with those terrible penalties or threatnings we spake of, and that with authority. Men, who have a long time been *like wilde asses accustomed to the wilderneſſe, and to ſnuffe up the winde at their pleaſures*, have *walked* (as the Apostle saith) *in the vanity of their mindes*, and done little else all their daies but *fulfill the lusts of the flesh*; cannot endure to hear of a yoke of righteousnesse and true holinesse, to be put about their neck; much lesse, that for kicking at it, or casting it off, they should be everlastingly tormented; such things as these are *very swords* to them, *which passe through their soules. He that doth evil*, our Saviour saith, *hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light* (nor willingly suffereth the light to come to him) *least his deeds should be reproved*. Certain it is, that men naturally doe not love to have either their deeds, or themselves reproved; 1. because they are jealous of their credits, and reputations; and a reproof seems to carry some dishonour and disparagement with it. And 2. men love to have a good opinion of their waies and practises; otherwise their consciences would be troublesome unto them. Now the proper tendency of a reproof, is to bring men out of love with such waies and practises, for which they are reproved: and these being such, which they are no waies willing to relinquish, the reproof of them must needs be a secret wound, a soar and deep cut to them; and consequently, the Gospel must needs be hatred in the highest unto those, that walk in such waies, because it is the sharpest and sorest reprover of them under heaven. For it both manifests and discovers the vilenesse, and

Jer. 2. 24.

Joh. 3. 20.

guilt of ſinne to the uttermoſt, farre beyond any diſcovery that can be made by another means, or light whatſoever; and then alſo threatens it with a puniſhment, which in torment and grievouſneſſe to be endured, exceeds all puniſhments whatſoever, if it be not repented of, and reformed. Which two ingredients muſt needs make a reproof of the ſharpeſt, and leaſt ſufferable conſtitution, that can be. That contrariety in the hearts and ſpirits of men againſt the Goſpel, which we now ſpeak of, the Scriptures and Goſpel it ſelf take full knowledge of. *The Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſell together againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed, ſaying; Let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us.* This combination and league, wherein *the Kings and rulers of the earth* conſpire againſt God and *Chriſt*, proceeds from nothing elſe, but that deep antipathy, or contrariety in their natures unto the Goſpel; as cleerly appears from the latter verſe of the two; *Let us break their bands, and caſt away*, &c. They were, the *bands and the cords, i.* the holy laws, and righteous precepts, the directions and injunctions of the Goſpel, wherewith God and his Chriſt, and in his Chriſt, ſought to binde them to their good behaviour, and to make them ſubjects unto heaven, that thus enraged them, and occaſioned this *conſultatio magna*, this great and generall conſultation, not onely to *break* them *aſunder, i.* (I conceive) by laws and edicts, and cruell threatnings to forbid the preaching of the Goſpel, and to ſuppreſſe it, once, and again; but alſo *to caſt them away from them*; *i.* to make ſure, if they knew how, never to be troubled with it more; however this they attempted, by ſeeking to make havock and deſolation of all that was called *Chriſtian* upon the face of the earth, by moſt barbarous and bloudy perſecutions.

Pſal. 2. 1, 3.

Nor did this fierce oppoſition and contrariety to the Goſpel, work only in the breſts and ſpirits of *Kings, and rulers of the earth*; though here (it is like) it was boiled up to the greateſt height, and ſtrength, and ſhewed it ſelf from hence with the greateſt terrour, and pomp of indignation; but the ſpirit we ſpeak of, wrought effectually alſo in perſons of lower rank and quality. They were not *Kings*, but Citizens (for ſo they

are

are called) who plainly ſaid, *We Will not have this man to reign over us*, Luk.19. wherein they cleerly expreſſed the abſolute contrariety in their natures to the Goſpel, by which the Lord Chriſt ſeeks to reign over the hearts, and ſouls, and conſciences of men. So thoſe that from time to time *beat the ſervants*, which *the Lord of the vineyard ſent to receive of the fruits thereof*, and at laſt *ſlew his ſonne*, when they had firſt *caſt him out of the vineyard*; were not *Kings or Princes*, but are called *huſbandmen*. They that cried out againſt the Lord Chriſt, *away With him, away With him; crucifie him* (Joh.19.) and ſo they that cried out againſt *Paul*, that *it Was not meet he ſhould live* (*Act.25.*) for preaching the doctrine of the Goſpel, were no *Kings*, but a mixt multitude of the Jews. So that evident it is, that not only perſons of ſome ſpeciall rank or intereſt in the world, but men of all ſorts and conditions, even the whole world, ruſh and branch, head and tail, were full of enmity againſt the Goſpel. And if that of the Lord and Maſter be true, that *he that doth evil* (*i.* whoſoever doth evil) *hates the light*; and that of the diſciple true alſo, that the *Whole World lay in Wickedneſſe, or evil*, when the Goſpel went forth into the world; and that common ſaying be partaker of truth with them both, that *quem quiſq; odit, perjiſſe expetit*, whatſoever a man hates, he wiſhes the death or deſtruction of it; it directly follows from all theſe, that the whole world, generally, deſired the ruine and downfall of the Goſpel. Now under what greater diſadvantage is it (almoſt) imaginable that the Goſpel ſhould attempt the conqueſt of the world, then this; to have no man (to ſpeak of) a friend to it, or that was willing to aſſiſt it, in this great enterpriſe; but to finde the whole world (in a manner) up in arms to oppoſe it, ready to deſtroy the life of it? Never was there any enterpriſe undertaken by man upon the like terms of diſadvantage; and yet how gloriouſly did this undertaking proſper in the hand of thoſe to whom it was committed? A great part of the world in a ſhort time was taken, and led away in captivity by it.

Luk.19.14.

Luk.20.10.
Joh.19.15.
Act.25.24.

Joh.3.
1 Joh 5.19.

The third (and moſt conſiderable) diſadvantage, under which the Goſpel undertook the reducement of the world, was the ſlender and weak arme of fleſh, which it had to ſtand by it,

and take part with it, to protect it against the rage and fury of so many potent adversaries, as magnified themselves against it (almost in every place) and to carry on the work of it in, the face of that fiery and puissant opposition, which was made by the world from all the quarters thereof. Who, or what were the men with whose assistance and help, the Gospel undertook that great and glorious undertaking we so often mention, the spirituall conquest of the world? What were their numbers? of what familie, descent, and bloud? of what educations, accomplishments, or endowments, were they? were they a numerous, and potent host, or army, that could bear down whole nations and kingdoms before them, and by force of arms, give laws to what state or people they pleased? and plant their doctrine by the terrour of the sword? No, they were at first but twelve men; and if they had been twelve times twenty thousand (especially such as they were) what had this been for the conquest of the world? Nor were prisons, or swords, or such like weapons and engines of the flesh, chosen by them, or by any direction from them, for Church officers, or for a life-guard to the Gospel (though now they have this honour cast upon them) nor was the favour of earthly Princes, or civil magistrates coveted by the *Apostles*, either for the support of the honour and dignity of their calling, or by way of advantage for the planting or propagating of the Gospel, though they were no more in number, but twelve men. Well; but though their number was inconsiderable, yet this (possibly) was recompenced by the quality, or interest of their persons. These twelve (may be) were the sons, or else of the house and lineage of those famous Kings and Princes, who were adored by the world, as gods, having been their great benefactours, as of *Jupiter*, *Hercules*, or the like: and by reason of their relation in bloud to such Progenitours, as these, the world might more willingly come in unto them, and receive the doctrine and laws, that they should bring unto them, and desire them to accept. No, they were the most of them (if not the whole number) persons of mean and ordinary parentage, poor fisher-men, unknown both they and their parents, and progenitours unto the world; yea they

were

were of that nation, and family in the world, of which neither *Jupiter*, nor *Mercury*, nor *Hercules*, nor any other of their gods, either great, or ſmall, were ever reported to have come. But it may be they were men of choice education and parts: they had ſome rare accompliſhments of learning, arts, ſciences above other men; and ſo might *take* the world *by craft*, or ſubtilty of deviſe; by magique charms, incantations, deluſions, or the like. Indeed *Julian* the *Apoſtate* ſaid that *Peter* and *Paul* were the moſt expert in magique of any that ever lived: and that *Chriſt* wrot a ſpeciall book of this profeſſion, and dedicated it unto *Peter* and *Paul*; and that by this means they enchanted the world. But alas! the Apoſtles, were children of no ſuch education or breed: they were ſo farre from any excellency or depth in any humane ſcience, or learning, that their adverſaries themſelves diſcovered them to be ignorant, and unlearned men (in reſpect of any ſuch learning.) They were brought up in the trade and imploiment of fiſhing, ſeverall of them, all their daies, till they were called to be Apoſtles; yea after three years converſe, and more, with Chriſt himſelf, even till his death, notwithſtanding thoſe many rich and bleſſed opportunities they had of gathering knowledge in abundance from his lips, who was ever and anon ſpeaking *the words of eternall life* unto them, yet it appears by their queſtions and demands, that they had learned very little of the myſtery of the Goſpel; yea by ſome expreſſions that came from them, it might reaſonably have been thought, that they had been utterly uncapable of the knowledge of it. That knowledge or learning, which they had afterwards, of what kinde ſoever it was, the world neither knew *Whence it came, nor Whether it went*, or was like to goe. Thus then you ſee, the Goſpel went forth in that great expedition to ſubdue the world, under the greateſt diſadvantage that lightly could be, in reſpect of any collaterall help, or ſtrength from men alſo. Act. 4 13.

Adde hereunto (in the fourth and laſt place: for we ſhall paſſe by the fift particular mentioned, *viz.* the ſeeming contradictions in the Goſpel, as having ſpake ſomewhat to theſe formerly in the point) the conſideration of thoſe numerous and potent enemies in every kinde, which every where beſtirred

themſelves, made head againſt the Goſpel, to keep off the dint and ſtroke of it from themſelves, and all thoſe, with whom they had to doe; and then by means of this, and the three former conſiderations, you will have an opportune ſtanding to behold the ſucceſſe of the Goſpel in the glory of it, when it advanced firſt out of *Jeruſalem*, upon that moſt honourable and bleſſed deſigne, to ſubdue the folly and madneſſe of the world, and to give laws of life and righteouſneſſe, and true wiſdom unto it. There were two ſorts of enemies more particularly, which as they were (more generally) fuller of enmity and of an hoſtile ſpirit againſt the Goſpel, then others, ſo had they opportunity above others to act this enmity of theirs with greateſt danger (at leaſt, with greateſt likelihood of danger) to the Goſpel, having indeed the generality of the world between them at their command, eaſie to be drawn by them, to give their aſſiſtance unto any thing, wherein by theſe men it ſhould be deſired. The firſt of theſe, were *Kings and Rulers of the earth*, men armed with ſecular authority and power. The latter, were *Philoſophers* and oratours, the wiſe and learned and eloquent men of the world. We ſpake ſomewhat of the former of theſe in another conſideration: now we are to look upon them, as perſons riſing up in their might, and acting with an high hand in every place againſt the Goſpel, to keep it out of their reſpective dominions, and conſequently out of the world. So that as God upon the fall of man, ſet an *Angel With a flaming ſword, to keep* the world out of his *Paradiſe*; ſo doe the world *ſet* many *Angels*, many *Kings and Princes*, as it were, *With flaming ſwords*, to keep God himſelf (in his Goſpel) out of their *Paradiſe*, I mean their earthly kingdoms, and dominions. That which *David* ſpake long before by the ſpirit of Propheſie, concerning the *Kings of the earth* ſetting themſelves, and the *rulers taking counſell together againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed*, was fulfilled, when the *Lord Chriſt* firſt ſet out upon his *White horſe* (the Goſpel) to ſubdue and *conquer* the world. This the Apoſtles themſelves, took knowledge of, when they began but to publiſh and preach the Goſpel openly in the world. The powers of the earth were preſently up, as it were, in arms

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to oppoſe them in their way, *taking it grievouſly* (as the text ſaith) *that they taught the people, and preached through Jeſus the reſurrection of the dead. Yea they preſently laid hands on them, and put them in hold*, or in priſon; and calling them before their tribunall, they *ſtraitly commanded them that they ſhould in no wiſe ſpeak or teach in the name of Jeſus.* Upon occaſion whereof, the Apoſtles, amongſt other *Chriſtians* praiſing God for bringing them off with their lives and liberties, mention that propheticall paſſage of *David*, which we ſpake of. *And when they heard it* (ſaith the text, *viz.* in what danger *Peter* and *John* had been, in regard of the high diſpleaſure of the councell, and how God had brought them off) *they lifted up their voices to God with one accord, and ſaid Lord — Who by the mouth of thy ſervant David haſt ſaid, Why did the heathen rage* &c. Again in the following chapter, the chief Prieſts with their complices, were filled with indignation againſt the Apoſtles for preaching the Goſpel, that (as the text ſaith) *they took counſell to ſlay them.* As the *Princes and rulers* amongſt the *Jews* began, and led the way, ſo did the Kings and rulers of other nations for ſome hundreds of years together follow, every where magnifying themſelves with all their power and policy, with all cruelty and bloud, againſt the Goſpel, making ſevere edicts and laws againſt thoſe, that ſhould either preach, or profeſſe it; yea proſecuting and purſuing them up and down the world, with ſlanders and reproaches, with ſpoilings and confiſcations of goods: with impriſonments, with baniſhments, with deaths, and thoſe the fulleſt of ſhame and torment, that they could deviſe; and all, to ſecure their palaces, their towns, their cities, their kingdoms againſt the Goſpel, that it might not get within them, or at leaſt might ſoon be caſt out, ruſh and branch, from amongſt them, if at any time, notwithſtanding all their diligence and watchfulneſſe, and way-layings, it ſhould come in unto them. They made partition walls of fire, and ſwords, and bloud, between their territories, and the Goſpel; to keep the one from coming at the other. It would be a long work, and take up much time to relate particularly what the Scriptures themſelves intimate, and other hiſtories of the primitive times relate, concerning

Act. 4 2,3. verſ. 18. Act. 4. 24. Act. 5. 33.

concerning the ſubtile, politike, the violent and bloudy practiſes in every kinde, that were ſet on foot, and managed with all induſtry and diligence, by the *rulers of the earth*, and their officers and agents, to keep the Goſpel down; that it might not propagate, nor lift up its head in the world. We have given you an account of theſe things in the generall, and ſhall content our ſelves herewith for the preſent; leaving the particulars to your own inquiry, and conſideration. Again

2. The other ſort of enemy, as deſperately bent againſt the Goſpel, as the former, and having as much (if not more) advantage in his way, to ſet the world at the greateſt diſtance from it in their affections, is the generation of the wiſe and prudent, of the learned and eloquent, of the great *diſputers of this world*. The Goſpel was as great an offence, and matter of indignation unto theſe men, as unto the other; and theſe by means of their endowments of wit, learning, eloquence, *&c.* were unto the others, as drums and trumpets are to ſouldiers, when by their warlike notes and ſounds, they fill their breſts with martiall courage and reſolution, againſt their enemies. So did the heathen oratours and Philoſophers, the one by their eloquence, the other by their arguments and diſputes, caſt oyl upon the flames, and made that enmity and hatred againſt the Goſpel, which was already kindled in the breſts of Kings, to break forth into a raging and devouring fire. *Lactantius* reports of a Philoſopher in *Bithynia*, who writing againſt Chriſtians, poured out himſelf in the praiſes of perſecuting Princes. Many ſuch paſſages there are upon record in eccleſiaſticall hiſtories.

Nor had they by the means aforeſaid, this potent influence upon Kings and Princes alone, to ſet them on fire againſt the Goſpel; they had the like, or greater opportunity to way-lay the Goſpel in the judgements and apprehenſions of the generality of men, by repreſenting it unto them, not only as a doctrine, that would expoſe them to the diſpleaſure of their Princes, and be the cruſhing and undoing of them, and their families and poſteritiies in that kinde; but alſo as a doctrine of vanity, that had no ground-work in reaſon for the bottom or foundation of it, as a doctrine incumbred with a thouſand abſurdities,

absurdities, and impossibilities, a doctrine more like unto a *devised fable*, then to a substantiall truth; and in this respect, not more generally, then deservedly, rejected and abhorred by the world. It is no hard matter for men of parts, learning, wit, eloquence, *&c.* to declaim against any thing how excellent soever; and to represent that, which is simply, and in it self, unblamable, as notoriously monstrous and foul: as it is easie for a cunning Painter to make the soundest and firmest timber that is, look like rotten wood, by colouring it accordingly; or to disfigure the best countenance and fairest face, into a meer deformity. Especially when such men as we speak of, men of wit and eloquence, have to doe, either with men that are weak and injudicious, and inconsiderate withall; much more, when they have to plead, or to promote such a cause, which suits with the desires and inclinations of those, to whom they addresse themselves in this kinde; and most of all, when their task is, only to perswade men from that, which if they doe imbrace, or own, they know, or at least have great cause to fear, will be destructive to their peace and comfort, yea to their very lives and beings in the world; I say when men of wit, and learning, and parts otherwise, are to deal with the judgements and affections of men upon such terms of advantage, as these, it cannot in reason be thought, but that they may very easily prevail, and carry their desire and designe in this case, cleer before them, whatsoever it be. Now the heathen Oratours and Philosophers we speak of, who were desperate enemies unto, and opposers of the Gospel, had generally all these advantages, to take off the judgements and affections of the world from it, yea and to turn their hearts against it. For first, the men of the world, with whom they had to doe in this kinde, were (generally) weak and low in understanding, at least in such things, which tended to the honour, credit, and countenance of the Gospel; and in respect of such things as these, inconsiderate withall. Secondly, the disparagement of the Gospel, as being a fable, or a lying doctrine, was agreeable to their corrupt natures, and sinfull desires and inclinations of their souls. Men (generally) were marveilously disposed and inclined so to judge of it; and desirous to have

reaſons and grounds, upon which they might with confidence and ſecuritie, ſo judge of it. Thirdly, and laſtly, the men whom they ſought to poſſeſſe with hatred and enmity againſt the Goſpel, knew very well of what evil conſequence it was like to be unto them, if they did own it, or make profeſſion of it: that it was like to be the ruine of their peace, and comfort in the world. All which conſidered, it is a wonder of wonders, duly conſidered, that ever the Goſpel ſhould get footing, much more, that ever *it ſhould run, and be glorified* (as the Apoſtles expreſſion is) in the world; and that, what between the bloudy rage and fury of Kings and Princes on the one hand, and the bitter and ſubtile diſputes and oppoſitions of Philoſophers and oratours on the other hand, *inter aſtutiam ſuadendi, & duritiam ſaviendi*, (as *Tertullian* hath it) it ſhould not, as between two milſtones, have been ground to pouder. But behold the finger and mighty power of God. This Goſpel, which was ſo mightily diſadvantaged in it ſelf, I mean in the frame and conſtitution of it, having ſo little therein (as we have ſeen) to commend it unto the world: which had ſo little help from men, ſo ſlender an arme of fleſh (as we heard) to ſtand by it, or promote the cauſe of it in the world; nay, which had ſo many great and Potent enemies to oppoſe it, who dealt furiouſly on the one hand, and ſubtilly on the other hand, againſt it; yea which had (in a manner) the whole world, as one man, up in arms againſt it; this Goſpel (I ſay) hath made its way through the midſt of all their fierce and fiery oppoſitions, hath thrown down mountains on the right hand, and mountains on the left, and hath built her ſelf a throne in the midſt of the earth, and *rules the nations with a rod of iron.* The Apoſtle *Paul* in his time took ſpeciall knowledge of the wonderfull ſucceſſe of the Goſpel, in every place whether he carried it, againſt all oppoſitions and gainſayings of men. *Now thanks* (ſaith he) *be unto God which alwaies cauſeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge by us in every place.* *Paul* alwaies, and in every place, triumphed in Chriſt, or, as the originall imports, τῷ θριαμβεύοντι ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ *who cauſeth us to triumph*, or, who carrieth us *in triumph*, in, or through *Chriſt*, *i.* we never come

2 Cor. 2, 14.

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to preach the Goſpel in any place, or to any people, but, as on the one hand, we meet with enemies and oppoſition, ſo on the other hand we ſtill conquer and ſubdue, and are made honourable, like thoſe that ride *in triumph*, by the ſpoils we take from *Satan*, by reſcuing ſome, either a greater, or leſſer number of ſouls, out of his hand and power, and *lead them captives* unto *Jeſus Chriſt*. And there is little queſtion but that the reſt of the Apoſtles *triumphed* in like manner in their reſpective quarters, where they were ingaged in the ſame warfare. So that the *three pecks* in which the *leven* of the Goſpel, was *hid*, *i.* the three parts of the world (being all of it that was then known) *Aſia*, *Europe* and *Africa*, ſoon came to be *levened* with it. Alas! *the Kings and rulers of the earth*, as well they that ruled it by power, as they that ruled it by wit and ſubtilty, when they conſulted the obſtruction of the Goſpel, *they imagined* (as *David* ſaith) but *a vain thing*. Their conſultations were but fleſh, and their horſes and chariots were but fleſh: but the counſells, by which the Goſpel advanced in the world, were ſpirituall; and the guard of it were *chariots and horſes of fire in the mountains:* ſo that it *laught* all that pomp and terrour of oppoſition, wherewith it was reſiſted by the world, *in the face to ſcorn*. It took no knowledge of the leopards, or lions, or bears, that were in the way of it: and *Leviathan*-like, it *eſteemed iron, as ſtraw, and braſſe, as rotten wood*. The bloudy edicts of Emperours and Kings *could not make it flee*, or keep back: and fire and ſword were *turned with it into ſtubble*. It leaped over the walls of their cities, it brake into their forts and caſtles, yea it found a way into the palaces and chambers of Kings and Emperors themſelves, and took hold of thoſe that ſtood at their right hand, even whilſt they were breathing out fury and death againſt it. When they let it alone it proſpered; when they perſecuted it, and that unto death, it proſpered yet more; in ſo much that they were at their wits ends, what to doe with it; or how to break the courſe and proceedings of it. One while they would give it reſt and peace, as it were, to ſee whether *proſperity* would not ſlay it. Well, this would not doe; therefore another while they fell upon it with the whole weight of their bloudy fury, and they

Mat 13,33.

Job.41,27.

would destroy it at once, rush and branch, *from under these heavens.* But when they cast three into the fiery furnace, they saw four walking in their stead; The bloud of Christians which they shed, made the places where it fell, more fruitfull, yea abundantly yeelding of Christianity. In so much that within fourty years after the first going forth of it into the world, the Gentiles themselves confessed that *the branches of this congregation* (I mean, of Christians) *were spread over all the world, and began to put in fear the very Roman Emperours themselves* (as *Tertullian* recordeth) yea, after they had sought by four most bloudy persecutions to root out the name of *Christ*, and *Christianity* out of the earth, and in the midst of the rage and heat of the fift (for about this time *Tertullian* lived; which was within the second century, or hundreth of years, after Christ) this authour, in an *Apology* which he writeth to the *Emperour* and his officers, in the behalf of Christians, expresseth himself thus (by way of answer to that common objection against Christians, which was then, it seems, on foot, as it is at this day, *viz.* that Christians were enemies and traytours to the state and dignity of the Emperour) *Si enim & hostes exortos &c. If we had a minde to be your open and professed enemies, and not to revenge our selves secretly, have we not numbers of men and sufficient strength for it? Externi sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus,* —— *we are but strangers, and yet we have filled all your Territorees, your Cities, your Ilands, your Castles, your towns, your counsells, your tents themselves, your tribes* (or families) *your offices, your palace, your senate, your market, or pleading place. We leave only your Temples free for you, and void of our company.* And a little after: *Suffudisset utiq; dominationem vestram tot qualiumcunq; amissio civium,* &c. *If we should have but withdrawn our selves from amongst you, the losse of so many citizens would have made the glory of your dominions ashamed. Yea certainly you would be afraid at your solitarinesse; and through the silence and stilnesse of all things in your city, as if it were dead, you would or might, have gon to look for such,* over whom therein to bear rule: with much more to this purpose. By all which it appears, that *neither tribulation, nor distresse, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakednesse, nor peril,*

Apolog. c 37

nor

*nor ſword, nor death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,* was *able to ſeparate* between the Goſpel, and a moſt triumphant ſucceſſe in the world: it got into the hearts and conſciences of millions of men, notwithſtanding the *Way* was *hedged up againſt it with thorns* and briers, with ſwords and ſpears, and torments, and deaths in every kinde: it taught the fleſh to forget her tenderneſſe and weakneſſe, and to think her ſtrength, like the *ſtrength of ſtones* or mountains. And may we not by this time, taking all into conſideration that hath been delivered in the point, ſay concerning it, as *Nicodemus* ſaid to *Chriſt. Rabbi, We know thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can doe the miracles, or Wonders, Which thou doeſt, except God be With him?* Have we not foundation and ground in abundance from the mighty and wonderfull works which the Goſpel wrought, in, and upon, the hearts of ſuch infinite numbers, both of men and women in the very face, as it were, of ſuch aſtoniſhing and devouring oppoſitions, to build this concluſion, with the greateſt confidence that may be, upon; that certainly this Goſpel comes from God; and that no doctrine under heaven *could doe the Works, Which* it hath done, *except God be With it?* Had not God ſtood by it, when it was at work, and helped it to pull, could it ever have drawn to it the hearts and mindes and affections of ſo many millions of men and women, rich and poor, old and young, as we have heard it hath done, againſt ſuch potent detentions, and pullings back; againſt ſo many mighty ingagements of fleſh and bloud, all drawing and haling a contrary way? If a man ſhould ſee a veſſel or a ſhip runne ſwiftly upon the waters, quite againſt the tide, and ſtream, and a ſtrong gale of winde, would he not preſently ſay, that there is an inviſible force or power, greater then that of the tide, and ſtream, and winde, put together; that carrieth her along, and gives her this motion? In like manner, the Goſpel bearing up with a ſwift and irreſiſtiole courſe, againſt the natures and diſpoſitions, againſt the fury and bloudy perſecutions, againſt the policy and ſubtile oppoſitions of the world, it cannot reaſonably be conceived, but that *the ſtarres in their courſes* carried it Joh 3. 2.

along with them, and that the power of the Almighty wrought
Heb 11, 12. with an high hand in the progressive motion of it, upon such terms. The Scripture (speaking of *Abraham*) saith, that *there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the starrs of the skie in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.* So may it be said concerning the Gospel; it was at first but as a *dead* doctrine, in appearance, having neither spirit, nor life, nor power of generation in it: yet have there sprung from the loins of it a generation of sons and daughters so numerous, that both heaven and earth are repleniſhed with them.

But here it may be objected and said; that neither is a speedy, nor yet a large-spreading propagation of a doctrine, or Religion, any argument of assurance, that either the one, or the other, is of a divine originall, or from God: for then the *Turkish* Religion, the law or doctrine of *Mahomet*, might claim this honour, of being from God too; for this also ran, and propagated, and made *proselytes* in abundance in the world; drew in many nations, and Kingdomes, into a subjection and obedience to it; as is famously known at this day. To this I answer,

That the weight and strength of the argument last insisted upon, to demonstrate the divinity of the Scriptures, did not simply stand, either in a speedy, or plentifull propagation of the Gospel; but in these, under such and such circumstances, against all those disadvantages, and unlikelihoods of successe, which were mentioned. So that though neither the one, nor the other of these, simply considered (I mean, neither the speedy, nor yet the abundant spreading, or propagating of the Gospel) be any argument necessarily concluding the divine authority of the Scriptures; yet either of them (and much more both together) being in conjunction with such and such circumstances, may be sufficient to evince, and reach, such a conclusion. That *Christ* was born of a woman, doth not prove any thing miraculous, or above the course of nature, in his conception: but that he should be born of a woman, which was a virgin, and had not known a man, this evinceth it. That the *Israelites* should walk safely upon dry land, did not prove

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any thing more, then an ordinary hand, or presence of God with them, but that they should walk upon dry land safely; in the midst of the sea, the waters standing like a wall on the right, and on the left hand, this did abundantly prove it. In like manner, though the fruitfulnesse of the Gospel in begetting sons and daughters in the world, was neither in respect of the suddennesse, nor of the abundance hereof, any sufficient proof of any peculiar relation in it unto God; yet the coincidence of such circumstances, as have been expressed, with these, may together advance a sufficient, yea an abundant, proof in this kinde. And if the doctrine or religion of *Mahomet*, could plead a fructification in the world upon the like terms, which the Gospel doth; doubtlesse the proof or demonstration would be unpartiall, and evince the one as well as the other, to be from God. But great are the differences on the one side, and on the other.

1. The doctrine or Gospel of *Mahomet*, was fitted to the naturall inclinations, lusts, and corruptions of men; it every waies comported with men in these; whereas the Gospel (as we heard) handles these with all severity and roughnesse; ever and anon injoining the crucifying, and prohibiting the fulfilling of them; urging and pressing upon men, with all authority and power, things that are of the most cutting nature, and sharpest contrariety unto them. The story saith, that *Mahomet set on foot his new religion, to bring light unto the Gentiles, and to mitigate to the Jews and Christians the severity of the law, and of the Gospel.* He considered (it seems) where, and in what particulars, the Gospel suffered disadvantage, in respect of the generality of men; what it was that made the doctrine of it so offensive to the greatest part of the world; and all such things as these, he either left out, or altered the nature or property of them in his law, and substituted things pleasing to corrupt nature in their stead. He gratified men in his law, with plurality of wives, to what number they pleased; gave them liberty to put them away, and exchange them, as oft as they pleased: made it lawfull for men to revenge injuries: taught that men are not bound by their oaths before God, except they swore from their hearts; with many other like.

like things of a wicked confederacy with the vile and ſinfull hearts of men. So that whereas, God, the authour of the Goſpel, for the compoſure and frame thereof, did, as it were, goe round about the corrupt hearts and natures of men, telling, and obſerving all the inordinate affections, corrupt inclinations and ſinfull propenſions and diſpoſitions thereof, that ſo he might make and temper his Goſpel to meet with, and ſtrike at them all; *Mahomet* on the contrary, took cognizance of them, that in the compoſure of his Goſpel, he might accommodate them, and ſpeak to their hearts.

So that if *Mahomets* Goſpel prevailed farre and near, and made the *world* to *wonder after it*, there is no great, no ſtrange thing in it: it went along with men in the waies and deſires of their hearts; and what ſhould hinder, but that they ſhould goe along with it? when *two are agreed*, it is no ſtrange thing to ſee them *walk together*. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome men, who though they cannot *endure ſound doctrine*, are yet apt enough *to heap up teachers to themſelves, according to their luſts*; ſo likewiſe is a doctrine, or teacher, that is unſound, likely enough to *heap up* auditours, and followers in abundance, according to their luſts and fancies; I mean, thoſe corruptions and looſe opinions, which are held forth, and taught by them. But as it was a greater thing, and a more demonſtrative argument of the extraordinary power and preſence of God, that one man ſhould be conceived and brought forth by a virgin; then that all the men that have been in the world beſide, ſhould be brought forth in the ordinary way of propagation; ſo that any one, or the ſmalleſt number of men, ſhould be made true proſelytes by the Goſpel, and cleave unto and follow that in the world, is a far greater and more conſiderable thing, and more demonſtrative of the gracious and powerfull preſence of God with it, then that the doctrine and law of *Mahomet* ſhould draw the whole world (in compariſon) after it. The *Law* of *Mahomet is carnall*, and the world is carnall, ſo that there is a ſymbolicall quality, a principle or compliance in this law with the world: but the law of *Chriſt* in the Goſpel is *ſpirituall*, and ſo in reaſon like to prove nothing, but hatred and enmity unto the world.

2. Tim. 4. 3.

2. There

2. There is this ſubtile and carnally politique device in the law of *Mahomet*, to make proſelytes of men laden with divers luſts and vanities (eſpecially being injudicious, and inconſiderate withall, which was the condition of the greateſt part of the world when this law moſt prevailed;) Firſt there are in this law, many precepts and injunctions unto things morally vertuous and good, which are apt to commend it much to the, naturall conſciences of men: as prayers unto God, faſtings almeſ-deeds, juſtice, temperance, *&c.* and againe many ſins againſt the light of nature, as covetouſneſſe, drunkenneſſe, adultery, deceit (eſpecially practiſed upon Orphans) and ſo ſwearing and foreſwearing, with ſome others of like nature, are ſorely threatned with the diſpleaſure of God, and fire of hell. Thus far the naturall conſciences of men are charged and burthened with this Law; which charge notwithſtanding is none other, then what lay upon them before, in thoſe naturall impreſſions of things morally honeſt and diſhoneſt, which God hath planted in them. But then ſecondly, though this doctrine of *Mahomet* thus chargeth the conſciences of men, and threatens tranſgreſſours ſorely yet it hath a way very pleaſing to fleſh and blood, to exonerate and diſcharge them againe, when they ſhall tranſgreſſe and do contrary to the things commanded; *viz.* certaine carnall penances or compenſations that are more eaſie and neare at hand (wherein the religion of Rome much ſympathiſeth with it,) as for example, about the caſe of perjury, there is this declared, *that they that forſweare themſelves, ſhall have no good thing in the world to come.* But elſewhere this burthen is eaſed by ſuch a *proviſo*, or clauſe of mitigation as this; that *to redeeme an oath* (as the law calleth it) *i e.* either to purchaſe a liberty to act contrary to an oath, or to redeeme a mans ſelf from under the danger or guilt of having broken an oath, *they muſt feed or cloath ten poore men, or faſt three daies.* Other inſtances of like nature might be produced, but we cannot inſiſt upon particulars. Generally to goe into the wars, and to be valiant and couragious there, is made an univerſall attonement for all ſins; and carries their paradiſe planted with all ſenſuall delights, and pleaſures, with a ſtrong hand before it, againſt

all wickednesses and villanies whatsoever. Now such a constitution and temper of a doctrine or law, as this, *viz.* wherein there shall be some things commanded, which are apt to commend it to the consciences of men, as just, and holy, and good; and other things againe prescribed of an easie purchase or procurement to relieve and ease the consciences of men, under the stroake of the guilt of sin, must needs be conceived very apt and likely to take with the generality of men, and to carry the sinfull, sensuall, and ignorant world before it, because it gratifies both conscience and concupiscence at once in such men; yea and that part of it wherein it gratifies conscience, I meane wherein it commands things agreeable to the morall impressions in the consciences of men, is a confirmation by way of comfort unto them, that that part of it also wherein it gratifies concupiscence, and gives men hope of escaping punishment, without mortification of their sins, is a truth approved of, and assented unto by God. So that in this consideration also the doctrine of *Mahomet*, had a maine advantage and likelihood of propagating it self in the world, which the law of God, and of Christ in the Gospel, had not. This law admits of no carnall or fleshly attonement for sins committed: nor doth it give any hope of the pardon of sins from the hand of God, unto those that have committed it upon any attonement whatsoever, without the mortification of it *in our members*, at least in some degree. Therefore in this respect also the great prevailing of the doctrine of *Mahomet* in the world, doth no waies shadow or obscure, the demonstrative force of this argument (to prove the royall descent of the Gospel from Heaven) the great and marvellous successe, wherein it reioyced over the world.

3. It was the spreading and prevailing of the Gospel upon the world, as it did, that occasionally (partly through the weaknesse, partly through the wickednesse of men,) promoted that great prevailing of the religion of *Mahomet* in the world. This it did occasionally two waies: First as it had acquainted the world with, and made familiar amongst men, the knowledge (or at least the discourse) of all those particulars

culars in that religion which are any waies considerable, before the doctrine thereof did so much as look forth into the world. Secondly, As by reason of the neglect of it, and the unworthy walkings of men under it (now generally prevailing upon the world) God was provoked to give up the world, to a reprobate or injudicious minde; a judgement which made them capable of receiving the impression of any doctrine or Religion whatsoever that should be brought unto them, though never so erroneous or inconsistent with reason it self.

For the first of these; It is no waies like that the doctrine or law of *Mahomet* should ever have bin so readily, or so generally received and submitted unto as it was in the world, had not the Gospel and the knowledge of the Scriptures, prepossessed the minds and apprehensions of men, with many of the principall and most considerable things, (at least with some kind of notions or broken ends of these things) which are propounded and taught in this law, as *viz.* concerning God as being the Creatour of heaven and earth, concerning *Christ* as a great *Prophet*, and the son of *Mary* a virgin; concerning the immortality of the soule, the resurrection of the dead, eternall pains or torments, immortall felicity and blisse, with severall other such things as these which are asserted in the said law; The world having generally drunk in before hand; though not the steady or grounded belief, yet a kinde of generall and loose credulity of such things as these from the Gospel, so that they were no waies new or strange unto them, when *Mahomet* propounded them to be believed in his law, this must in reason needs be looked upon as a great advantage, yea as a preparation in the world to receive such a doctrine or religion as that, which should hold forth these things unto them, especially in conjunction with other things, which were more sutable to the vanity of their minds, and sensuality of their hearts, then other particularities of the Gospel were; yea *Peter Martyrs* judgment in the case is (which with me is very passeable,) that *Mahometanisme* is nothing else but an heresie; and the professors of it, how many soever in number they be, a remnant of the *Arrians* of old, only more corrupt, and of a deeper degeneration from the

truth; (which is a thing of frequent obſervation in a continuation or ſucceſſion in the line of hereſie, the latter brood is commonly the worſt.) So then in this conſideration and reſpect alſo, the doctrine of *Mahomet* had a ſpeciall advantage which the Goſpel had not, for the propagating and promoting of it in the world. When the Goſpel firſt ſet forth, and did that glorious execution, which hath been formerly repreſented unto you, upon the world, it had no ſuch foundations already laid to build it ſelf, and its acceptation in the world upon; all things (in a manner) which it propoſed unto men, were ſtrange and new, not ſo much as the name of Chriſt had been heard of in any of thoſe nations and kingdomes, which yet it ſubdued: the reſurrection of the dead by the confeſſion of *Philoſophers* themſelves, who were the wiſeſt and learnedſt men in the world, was a new and ſtrange doctrine unto them.

Act.17.1.9

There is the ſame conſideration of other the main doctrines of the Goſpel, as of juſtification by faith, adoption, mortification, ſelf-deniall, &c. the world had not ſo much as heard. by the lighteſt hearing of the eare of any of them, when the Goſpel came to demand beliefe of them, and ſubjection unto them. So that the religion of *Mahomet*, borrowed of the Goſpel (or rather ſtole from it,) a ſtock of truth formerly received and acknowledged by men, to ſet up with in the world, but the Goſpel ſet up without any advantage or help at all in this kind; it borrowed not any thing from the doctrine of *Mahomet* (which had no being at all in the world in theſe daies) nor yet from any other Sect or kinde of learning, doctrine, or religion in the world whatſoever. That great eſtate of honour and acceptation, which it ſoon raiſed unto it ſelf in the world, it raiſed not by any contribution from other doctrines, but by means of that glorious ſpirit of light and truth which accompany it.

Again, 2. by that time that *Mahomet* was now ready with his religion and law, to advance with them into the world, the world had in a very great meaſure withdrawn it ſelf from the Goſpel, I meane from that high eſteeme of it, which God expected men ſhould have had, and which the infinite

infinite worth of the Goſpel it ſelf, in a way of reaſon and equity, required of them: yea they were generally grown rebellious againſt the laws and holy precepts and injunctions of it Upon which great provocation of Apoſtacy, the *ſoule* of the Almighty tooke not that pleaſure in the world, which it had done formerly. *If any man draw back* (ſaith God) *my ſoule ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* Now the world where the Goſpel had been formerly preached and received yea and ſubmitted unto, in the holy laws thereof, about and before the times we ſpeak of (I mean of *Mahomets* coming upon the ſtage) had drawn back from the Goſpel, and were fallen from the love and conſcientious practiſe of it: and in this reſpect, *the ſoul of the Lord tooke no pleaſure in it; i.* (by the figure παρενωσις, which is, when a little only is expreſſed, but much intended) *the ſoul of the Lord* greatly abhorred it, and reſolved to bring that great ſin, which it had committed in the contempt of the Goſpel, upon the head of it: Now the judgment by the inflicting whereof God is wont (as it were) of courſe, to take vengeance upon men for the neglect, or rejection of the Goſpel in the truth of it, is the giving of them up to deluſions to beleeve lies. This is evident from 2 Theſ. 2. 11, 12. *And for this cauſe,* viz. *becauſe they received not the love of the truth that they might be ſaved. God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould beleeve a lye, that they all might be damned who beleeved not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe.* And thus when the Jews rejected their true *Meſſiah* God avenged himſelfe upon them by that very judgment we ſpeak of; *viz.* by delivering them up to a ſpirit of that vanity and folly which prevailed with them to believe and follow counterfeit *Meſſiahs,* almoſt without end; yea even ſuch, who were ſo far from giving any ſuch ſubſtantiall and demonſtrative accounnt of what they claimed and pretended unto, as he who was the true *Meſſiah* indeed did, both by his doctrine, miracles and converſation; that they rather gave evident ſignes that they were indeed but counterfeits. Now then when *Mahomet* came to utter the baſe commodity of his lying religion in the world, he found the world in ſuch a poſture and condition to deale with him, and to believe him, wherein

Heb. 10. 38.

2 Theſ. 2. 11, 12.

it had never been ſince the firſt day it was a world, untill then, *viz.* under the diſpleaſure of God for contempt of the Goſpel; a diſpleaſure of that nature and conſequence, that no other diſpleaſure of God (I meane for any other ſin or provocation whatſoever) produceth the like ſtrange effects; in, or upon men, to make them preys to every lying vanity. Every ſpirit of deluſion that meets them in the world, under this judgment, may ſlay them, or doe with them whatſoever it liſteth. Yea there is little queſtion to be made, but that had this doctrine of *Mahomet* been ten degrees more rotten, or ridiculouſly irrationall then it is, it had at that time drawn the world after as it did. Now the Goſpel found not the world under any ſuch judgement, or diſpleaſure of God as this; no the day wherein the Goſpel went forth to viſit the world, was a day of love, and favour, and great compaſſion, from the moſt high God unto it; the world from the foundations of it (or however from the fall of man,) had not found the like grace or favour in his ſight, as now it had.

4. And laſtly, The weapons, whereby the religion of *Mahomet* was promoted in the world, were chiefly *carnall*, and not *ſpirituall*; He taught the world his law, as *Gideon taught the men of Succoth*, I meane, *With thorns and briers*; and much after the ſame manner, wherein the *Grand Seignior* of *Rome* procureth quarter for his religion and law in the world, whoſe chiefe quartermaſters were, *fire*, and *fagot*. *Kill the unbeleevers whom you conquer* (ſaith *Mahomet* in his law) *if they will not turne to the law*: and the reader or preacher of this law (as a Fryer who ſometimes, as himſelf ſaith, had bin a ſtudent amongſt them in the Vniverſity of *Baldach*, reporteth) holdeth a bare ſword in his hand, or ſetteth it up in an eminent place to the terrour of the gainſayers. So that whereas *Chriſt* went forth in his Goſpel ſitting on a *white horſe*, attempting and making his conqueſts *Without ſtriving, or crying, or any mans hearing his voice in the ſtreets: i.* with all gentleneſſe and meekneſſe, without offering, or threatning the leaſt outward force or violence unto any, that ſhould oppoſe him; *Mahomet* on the contrary ſet forth in his Law, upon

Iudg. 8. 16.

Rev. 2.
Mat. 12. 19.

upon a *red horse*, taking a *great sword* in his hand, wherewith he threatned to take peace from the earth, I mean to trouble, oppresse or slay where his law should not be imbraced and subjected unto. So that in this respect also the marvelous prevailings of the doctrine of the Gospel upon the world, have a plain character upon them, by which they may be cleerly discerned to be from God; and the prevailings of *Mahometanisme*, another, as plain upon them, by which they may readily be known to be from the wisdome of the flesh, and from men.

A Third Demonstration and proof (of that kinde we are now upon) that the Scriptures are from God, is the exact and punctuall fulfilling of those predictions and prophecyes, which are contained in the Scriptures; as *David* in an holy addresse unto God concerning his providence and interposall about his conception, and first rise of his being, expresseth himself thus; *My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in time were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* In like manner it appears from the Scriptures, that whoever was the Authour of them, saw as it were, the substance and frame of many great events occurrences, changings, and turnings of things in the world, whilst they were yet secret, and only in working in the lowest parts of the Earth, and that he wrote down all the particulars of them in his book; which in time came to be fashioned and to receive their being, whilst as yet there was none of them. It would take up more time then you I believe would willingly allow for the perfecting of the demonstration (and perhaps more then is necessary) to insist particularly upon all the prophecies and predictions of future events that are found in the Scriptures and compare them with the events themselves, and shew how particularly and punctually they have bin fulfilled. For certainly there is none of them, whose time and season appointed for the fulfilling, is already past, that hath fallen to the ground, but they have all, from the greatest to the least of them, taken place and received actuall and compleat performance in all particulars whatsoever mentioned

Psal. 139. 15, 16.

in

in the prediction, and are to this day numbred amongſt the famous providences of God, and hiſtoricall paſſages of the world. I ſhall inſiſt only upon ſome few of them, ſomewhat more particularly, pointing at others in a briefe and generall way; premiſing only theſe two things in two words. Firſt, That the predictions or prophecies of things in the Scriptures, (at leaſt many of them) are delivered in plaine ſignificant, and direct words, without ambiguities and doubtfullneſſe of ſenſe in the expreſſion; and ſecondly, that they are of ſuch events and things, whoſe effecting or coming to paſſe, in reſpect of ſecond cauſes, depended only upon thoſe that were meerly contingent, as (for the moſt part) upon the wills and actions of men, and not upon ſuch which act uniformly, and with neceſſity of cauſation: which kinde of events, may be foreſeen (at a good diſtance of time) by an eye of reaſon, enlightned only with the knowledge of natures courſe, motions, and workings. We ſhall have occaſion to touch upon theſe two particulars afterwards, but to our purpoſe: The Scriptures record ſeverall promiſes made unto *Abraham* that great and famous Patriarch of the Jews, which were as ſo many prophecyes, or predictions of things that were future: we ſhall inſtance but two of theſe. amongſt many The one was concerning his having iſſue whenas yet he had none, nor was any waies like ever to have any, yea when he deſpared and was out of all hope of having any, *Behold* (ſaith he unto God) *thou haſt given me no ſeed, wherefore loe a ſervant of my houſe ſhall be mine heyre*: Before he had the promiſe and word of God that he ſhould have iſſue, he did *conſider his own body, as being now as good as dead*, being almoſt 100, *years old*, and *the deadneſſe of Sarahs womb too*, and judged of things accordingly though (it's true) when once God had told him he ſhould have a childe by her, he conſidered neither (as the Apoſtle informeth us, *Rom.* 4.) But how unlikely ſoever it was in a way of reaſon, or experience that *Abraham* ever ſhould have a childe eſpecially by *Sarah*. yet the propheticall promiſe of God miſcarried not (no not in the leaſt) the womb of that was not dead, it brought forth that which was conceived in it, at the time appointed, *for Sarah conceived*

Gen. 15. 3.

(ſaith

(ſaith the text) *and bare Abraham a ſon in his old age, at the ſame ſeaſon that God told him*; Here was both ſubſtance and circumſtance of what was foretold, performed. The other propheticall promiſe made unto *Abraham*, was, concerning the going down of his poſterity into *Egypt*, and of the time of their ſervitude, and the manner of their deliverance from thence. This particular was foretold 400. *years* (at leaſt) before it was performed; and that at ſuch a time, when there was not the leaſt appearance or intimation of a likelyhood of it: *Know of a ſurety* (ſaith God to *Abraham*) *that thy ſeed ſhall be a ſtranger in a land that is not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them, and they ſhall afflict them* 400. *years*: *And alſo that nation whom they ſhall ſerve, will I judge, and afterwards they ſhall come out with great ſubſtance.* Now how exactly this prediction was in all points fulfilled, as well for the time propheſied of, as for the judgement executed upon the Egyptians, and deliverance of *Abrahams* poſterity, with that ſubſtance mentioned in the prophecy, is plainly and diſtinctly laid down in the book of *Exodus*; and beſides is not only avouched and conſtantly beleeved by the Jews themſelves at this day, who yet were bitter enemies to Chriſtianity, but is acknowledged by heathen writers themſelves and particularly by *Porphyry* (in his 4th book againſt Chriſtians) who yet was one of the ableſt, and withall the moſt malicious enemie that Chriſtians ever had.

Gen 21.2.

Gen.15.13,14.

Another famous propheſie, was that uttered by *Jacob* being now ready to leave the world; *The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from betweene his feet until Shiloh come: and to him ſhall the gathering of the people be.* This prophecy, as touching the fulfilling of it, *i.* the compleat fulfilling of it, was ſuſpended for well nigh 2000d years; though it's true for a great part of this time *viz.* (as *Joſephus* teſtifies) from the entrance of the government into the tribe of *Judah*, in the perſon of King *David*, untill the going out of it again in the perſon of *Hircanus* whom *Herod* ſlew; but when the time appointed was fulfilled, the propheſie it ſelf was fulfilled alſo; which was, when *Herod* a ſtranger, and of another nation, cut of the houſe and line of *Judah* from the government of *Jury*; about which time (as the New Teſtament it ſelf

Gen 49.10.

declareth) the *Shiloh* ſpoken of in the propheſie, *i.* the long expected *Meſſiah* (as all interpreters I have met with, expound it) came. Now there are in and about this propheſie, ſome particulars of marvellous importance and weight for our preſent purpoſe.

Firſt, When this propheſie was uttered by *Jacob*, there was no likelihood at all that the nation of the Jews, *i.* the poſterity of *Abraham* by *Jacobs* line, ſhould ever come to have any *ſcepter* or Kingly power amongſt them in any of their tribes whatſoever. For now the ſons of *Jacob* were very low, and poore, and but few in number, in a ſtrange land; out of which they were never like to depart, or to become a diſtinct nation by themſelves.

2. In caſe ſuch a thing ſhould come to paſſe, I mean, that they ſhould fairly get out of *Egypt*, and grow into a diſtinct people by themſelves, and come to have a ſcepter or government among themſelves; yet there was very little likelyhood, that ever this *ſcepter* ſhould come into *Judahs* hand; or the Government fall into his tribe; becauſe he had three elder brothers, *Reuben*, *Simeon* and *Levi*, who according to the law of nature, and cuſtome of all nations, were likely to enjoy the dignity before him.

3. When *Moſes* recorded and put in writing this propheſie (which was ſome hundreds of years after it was uttered) there was leſſe appearance or likelyhood of truth in it, then was at the time of the uttering it. For *Moſes* himſelf was now in actuall poſſeſſion of the Government, (who was of the tribe of *Levi*;) and was put into it by God himſelf: yea, and *Joſhua*, deſigned by God for his ſucceſſour, was not of the tribe of *Judah*, but of *Ephraim*. And this conſideration (by the way) is a notable evidence for the truth and certainty of this, that the propheſie we ſpeake of, was uttered by *Jacob*; it being no waies like, that *Moſes* would ever have put ſuch a propheſie in writing, to the diſparagement of his own tribe, or to the offence or provocation of the three tribes, *Reuben*, *Simeon*, and *Ephraim* (two of which as hath been ſaid, were in priviledge of birth before *Judah*, and the third immediatly deſigned by God himſelfe to the government;) and perhaps of the reſt of the tribes

tribes alſo, had it not been generally received amongſt them for a truth, that *Jacob* their father had ſpoken it.

4. In the daies of *Samuel*, who was the laſt of the Judges, and about 400. years after *Moſes*, there was yet no appearance of any life or truth in this propheſie; in as much as the government had not yet ſo much as look'd upon, or towards the tribe of *Judah*. At laſt, when God, upon the importunity of the peoples deſire, granted them a King, he choſe *Saul*, who yet was not of the tribe of *Judah*, but of *Benjamin*: and beſides, had ſeverall children, who were likely, one or other of them, they and their race, to have ſucceeded in, and inherited the kingdome. So that all this while the propheſie we ſpeak of, lay as if it had been quite dead, without breath or motion; as if there had been neither life nor ſoul in it. At laſt it began to open the eyes a little, when *David*, a poor young ſhepheard was choſen out of the tribe of *Judah*, to be King, and to ſtand as it were upon the feet, when the government and *ſcepter* were eſtabliſhed to him, and his poſterity. Yet,

5. We know that ten tribes of the twelve, at once revolted from *Judah*, and never returned to their obedience again; but combined and conſpired with the Gentiles and enemies on every ſide, to overthrow and extirpate the ſaid Kingdome, and government of *Judah*.

6. Many of *Davids* race and poſterity themſelves, who ſucceeded in this Kingdome; ſinned againſt God with as high an hand (if not with a farre higher) then *Saul* had done, whom God rejected, with his poſterity, from the Kingdome. Yea,

7. The glorie and power of this Kingdom, was given by God into the enemies hand, and was made tributarie to other States and Kingdomes, for many years together; as firſt to the *Caldeans* or *Babylonians*; and afterwards to the *Romans*; and yet,

8. And laſtly, the ſpirit of Truth in this Propheſie wrought through all theſe difficulties and improbabilities, brake in ſunder all theſe barrs of iron, and firſt brought the ſcepter and government into, and then maintained and kept it in the hand of *Judah*, till *Shiloh* or *Meſſiah* was ready to *come*: or (which is the ſame) till Jeſus, who is called Chriſt, was now

ready to be born into the world. Evident it is from *Iosephus*, and other grave Historians of those times, that it was a very little while before the birth of *Christ*, that *Herod* made that bloody massacre of the tribe of *Iudah*, (so much spoken of) and slew *Hircanus* the last King of *Davids* race.

A third very remarkable Prophesie recorded in the Scriptures, is that concerning *Cyrus*; which was given out by *Isaiah*, above an 100. (some say, near 200.) years before *Cyrus* was born. You have it in the latter end of the 44. and beginning of the 45. chapters of this Prophet: *That saith of Cyrus* (speaking of God) *he is my shepheard, that shall performe all my pleasure, even saying to Ierusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid*, &c. Now,

Isa. 44. 28. 45 1, 2, &c.

1. That a man should be call'd by his name an 100. years and more before he was born (it is like, long before his Parents were born, who were at liberty to call him by any other name.)

2. That it should at such a distance of time be said (and that with truth, as the event famously known, declared) that such a man should conquer so great and potent a monarchy, as that of *Babylon* was at this time.

3. That he should build again the Temple of *Ierusalem*, which others of his own religion had destroyed, *&c.* and that he should doe it indeed, accordingly; these things (I mean, predictions and events compared together) certainly are the undoubted characters of him, who with one view overlooketh the long tract and whole duration of time which extendeth it self from the beginning of the world, to the end thereof, with all the motions, occurrences, and events, of things that rise up, and fall, and come to passe within the compasse thereof.

Nor can this prophecy of *Isaiah*, be any waies suspected of forgery, or supposititiousnesse in any kinde; in as much as it was pronounced openly, as other propheses were, in the hearing of all the people, and so divulged into many hands before the captivity: and then also carried into *Babylon* and *Chaldea*; where it is no otherwaies like, but that it was dispersed, seen, and read of many, many years before the accomplishment of it, yea whilst as yet it look'd like a *cloud without water*, or a parcell

parcell of words, that neither had weight, nor worth of truth in them.

And for the event of the thing, as 1. That there was such a man as *Cyrus*; 2. That a man called by this name did conquer *Babylon*, and vested himself with the Monarchy thereof; and 3. That the same man did restore the captivity of the Jews, and furthered the building of the temple of *Jerusalem*, with large contributions of his own money thereunto, heathen Authours themselves, and generally they that write the histories of those times, do attest and confirm.

To passe by many other particular prophecyes, in other parts of the Scriptures, how many are there in *Daniel* alone, very strange and wonderfull (compared with the nature, and truth of their correspondent events) as, 1. That concerning the destruction of *Belshazzer*, foretold unto him in the midst of his great jollity, and triumph, and in the hearing of all his nobles. Dan. 5. 25, 26, &c. 2. That delivered to *Darius* the *Mede*, in the beginning of the second *monarchy* of the *Medes* and *Persians*, which foretold him, how many Kings should reigne after him; and how the fourth, who was to be the last, and *Darius* by name too, should fight against the *Grecians*, and be overcome by a *Grecian King* (which was *Alexander* the great.) and 3. That also concerning the kingdome of the *Grecians*, as that, after *Alexanders* death, it should be divided, and torn in pieces by his Captains, and not passe to his posterity (which last is confirmed by many heathen writers.) 4. That great prophecy, concerning the four great Monarchies of the world, which are so lively and distinctly described, as if he had lived in them all, and had had that experience of them all respectively, which the world since hath had. 5. That concerning the fight between *Darius* and *Alexander*, under the names of, the *fierce Goat* with one horn, and the *great Ram*. But to passe by these, with divers others of like consideration, in the writings of this one Prophet; yea and a 1000[d] more in other parts of the Scriptures; I shall only further insist upon some few particulars of those many prophesies, which are found in the Old Testament concerning Christ; and particularly upon those which relate to such things about *Christ*, that are recorded and acknowledged by those, who

Dan. 11. 1, 2.

Dan. 7. 3, 4.

who are no friends, or favourers of *Christianity*, as well *Jews* as *Gentiles*.

Isa. 7. 14. Jer 23. 6. Jer 33. 16. &c.

First, There is a great concurrence of Scripture prediction in the old Testament, that *Christ* the *Messiah*, was to be God. We shall not need to instance for the proof hereof, the Scriptures being (generally) so well known to us in this behalf. The ancient Jews, and particularly the holy *Rabbine* (as the Jews call him)

*Rabbi Haccadosch.*

who lived not long after *Christ*, were cleerly of this faith. The expressions of some of them to this point, are marvellously remarkable; but it would be too much to burthen you with the particular records of them. *Philo* the *Jew*, the most learned of this nation since the Prophets, and who lived in the same time with *Christ*, having mentioned a tradition amongst them, which saith, that before their return from banishment, they *must expect the death of an High Priest*; professeth this to be his opinion concerning this *High Priest*, *viz.* that *he shall be the very Word of God, which shall be void of all sin, voluntary, and involuntary, Whose Father shall be God; and this Word shall be that fathers Wisdome, by which all things in the world were created.* The *Sybilline* Oracles likewise, written in Greek verse, by certaine women *Prophetesses* among the Gentiles,

*Ad calcem lib. de vita Constantini.*

long before the Incarnation of *Christ* (as *Constantine* the Emperour long since fully proved, in a learned Oration recorded by *Eusebius*,) cleerly deliver and assert the same thing. One of these *Prophetesses* begins her Greek meeter thus: *Know thy God which is the Son of God*; And *Iosephus*, a learned Jew and Historian, who was born a very short time after *Christ*, though he doth not expresly acknowledge *Christ* to have been, God, yet he seems somewhat tender of calling him a man, i. a meer man. The tenour of his words, as to this purpose, is well known: *There was* (saith he) *at this time one Jesus, a*

*Iosephus Antiqu. Iudaic. l. 18 c 6.*

*wise man, if it be lawfull to call him a man; a Worker of most wonderfull miracles, and a master and teacher of all such men, as were willing and content to imbrace the Truth.* And a little after: *unto those who loved him from the beginning, he appeared the third day,* (viz. after he had been crucified) *according to what the Prophets divinely inspired, had, besides many other miraculous things, foretold concerning him, that were to come to passe.*

2. The

2. The Scripture Prophecy which went before of the *Messiah Christ*, predeclared likewise unto the world, that he was to be the *Son of God*. The tenour of this propheſie alſo concerning him, is atteſted both by Jews, and Gentiles. For the former: The ancient Jewiſh Expoſitours more generally (and ſome of the later alſo) both hold, and prove by Scripture, that *Chriſt*, or the *Meſſiah*, was, and is to be the very Son of God. Multiplicity of quotations in this kinde, would but overcharge the diſcourſe. Take the firſt fruits inſtead of the harveſt. *Rabbi Kimhi* proveth by a long diſcourſe, that the word, *Shiloh* (in *Jacobs* propheſie concerning *Chriſt* *Gen.*49. 10. formerly mentioned) ſignifieth as much as, *Filius ejus*, his Son; that is, the Son of God. The holy *Rabbine* (lately mentioned) cabalizeth thus, upon the place of *Ieremy* even now cited, where he findeth the *Meſſiah*, to be called, *Jehovah*. *Even as* (ſaith he) *the letter* ה He, *in Jehovah, is compounded of two other letters*, viz. ד *Daleth, and* ו *Vau* (as appeareth by their forme) *ſo ſhall the Meſſiah, who is ſignified by the word* Jehovah, *be made of two natures, the one, divine, and the other, humane. And as in Jehovah, there is twice* ה *He, and conſequently two* ד *Daleths, and two* ו *Vaus, contained therein; ſo are there likewiſe two births, filiations, or childhoods in Meſſiah, the one, whereby he ſhall be the Son of God, the other whereby he ſhall be the ſon of a virgin, which Iſaiah calleth, the Propheteſſe.* Iſa.9.6. Iſa.27.12.&c.

As for the later, the atteſt of the Gentiles, to the truth of this propheſie; we lately cited this teſtimony from one of the *Sybills*; wherein ſhe thus ſpeaks unto the world; *Know thy God, which is* the ſon of God; There are many other paſſages in theſe *Sybilline* verſes of like import. Beſides in the fragments of thoſe ancient writers, *Zoroaſtres*, *Hermes*, *Triſmegiſtus*, and others, which are yet exſtant, and recorded by ſomewhat later Authours, there is frequent mention made of the *Son of God*; as alſo in the writings of *Orpheus*, *Heſiod*, and others. Beſides, the Platonique *Philoſophers*, ſpeak much of the *Son of God*, in their writings alſo. He that deſires ſatisfaction herein, may readily obtain his deſire, if he pleaſe to read either what *Origen* anciently wrote againſt *Celſus*; or what *Cyril* in his firſt book againſt *Julian* the Apoſtate.

3. It

Gen 3.15.
[a] Isa.7.14. 15, &c.
Isa.9.6.
Isa 42.1,2,&c.
Dan.9.26,&c.

3. It was further presignified concerning *Christ*, by the Scriptures of old, that he should be man: [a] and consequently (the two last particulars taken into the consideration) that he should be both *God, and man*. This we heard lately attested by that famous *Rabbi* (among the Jews) *Rabbi Haccadosh*: who yet further (to this point) after the words mentioned, immediatly subjoyns thus: *And as in Jehovah the letter* ה *He, is twice put, and yet both Hehs do make in effect but one letter, so in Messiah there shall be two distinct natures, and yet shall they make but one Christ*. It is famously known how plainly and particularly the forementioned writings of the *Sybills* speak of the birth and incarnation of Christ. *Josephus* (of whom mention hath been made more then once) a *Jew*, as well by Profession, as by nation, went as neare the acknowledgment of the verification of this prophesie (*viz.* that the *Messiah* should be both God and man) in the person of *Christ*, as neare might be, without a plain andright down acknowledgement of it indeed; in the words formerly related: *There was at this time one Jesus, a Wise man if it be lawfull to call him a man*, &c.

Isa.7.14.
Jer 31.22.
He that desires to see more testimonies from the Jews, upō this point, may please to read *Mornæus de veritate religionis*, (a worthy and learned tract transl ted long since into english) cap 28.
[c] Isa.11.1.
Psa.86.36.37.

4. The *Messiah* according to Scripture prediction, was to be born of a virgin. This we have heard lately asserted in plain terms, by the Jewish Doctours themselves: yea all the *Sybills* in like manner make speciall mention of *the mother of the Messiah; that she should be a pure and most holy virgin*; and it is sufficiently known, that those professed enemies of Christianity (the *Turks* I mean) do generally acknowledge this to be true in the person of Christ. And some histories report, that *Simon Magus* (that *primogenitus Diaboli*, first born son of the divel, as one of the fathers called him) to gain a beliefe amongst men, that he was the *Messiah*, affirmed himself to have been born of a virgin.

5. Concerning the house and family out of which the *Messiah* was to come, the Scripture long before particularized the house of *David* [c]. And this point of prophecy the Jews themselves without all contradiction acknowledge to have been fulfilled in the person of *Christ*; it being recorded in their *Talmud* it self, that *Jesus* of *Nazareth crucified, was of the blood*

*royall*

*royall from Zorobabel of the house of David.* And besides that lamentable and bloody massacre, which (as both *Philo* and *Josephus* themselves record) *Herod* made of all the nobility and chief men of the tribe of *Iudah*, to secure himself in the kingdome of *Iudæa*, together with that false and forged pedegree which he caused to be drawn up, and divulged, wherein his descent of the tribe of *Iudah* was avouched, do sufficiently testifie, that it was the generall and confident perswasion of this nation, that their *Messiah* was to come of this Tribe.

6. The Scriptures of old, plainly foretold the rejection of the *Messiah* by his own nation and people, [a] when he should come, together with his death, as a malefactour, [b] yea and gave cleare intimation of the manner or kind of his death. [c] How truly the first of these was (and is too, at this day,) accomplished in the person of *Christ*; cannot be unknown unto those who understand any thing of that obdurate and inveterate spirit, wherewith this whole nation, though scattered up and down the world, hath allwaies been, and still remains possessed against *Iesus Christ*, and Christian Religion. As concerning the manner of his death, which was, by crucifixing, we lately cited a plain record, and acknowledgment hereof out of the *Talmud* it self. And the *Acrostick* verses, (as they are commonly called, and famously known amongst learned men) of one of the *Sybills*, the initiall letters of which verses make these words, *Iesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Crosse.* doe with no lesse evidence joyn in that testimony. The two last of these verses, (in English) speak thus; He that hath bin here described by our *Acrostick verses, is an immortall* Saviour; *and a* King *that must suffer for our sins.*

[a] Isa. 53. 1, 2.
[b] Isa. 53. 9, 12. Dan. 9. 26. Deut. 21. 23.
[c] Isa 22, 16. *&c.*

7. (And lastly, to omit many other particulars) concerning the time, wherein the *Messiah* was to come into the world, and to suffer, the Scripture long before had described it by certain charecters and signes, limited and bounded it with certain great and very remarkeable events and occurrences of Providence in the world. As first by the departure of the Sceptre or government from the tribe of *Iudah* [d] a little

Gen. 49. 10.

before; 2. by the deſtruction of *Ieruſalem*, and of the ſecond temple, [a] a little after. 3. by the contemporarineſſe of the fourth and laſt (*i.* the *Romane*) Monarchy with him. 4. And laſtly, (and which is more then all the reſt) by the punctuall determination of the very yeare it ſelf ([b] yea of the part of this year) [c] wherein he ſhould be crucified, *viz.* in, or about the middle of the foure hundred eighty and third yeare after the edict of *Cyrus for the building again of Ieruſalem*: Concerning which year, though there be ſome variation amongſt *Chronologers* and *Expoſitours* in the preciſeneſſe of the account, yet according to the generall currant of (well nigh) all the computations made, it falls into the raigne of *Tiberius* who ſucceeded *Auguſtus* in the *Romane* Empire. Now that all theſe ſignall properties or diſtinguiſhing characters of time were found in that very part of time or ſeaſon, wherein *Ieſus Chriſt* accompliſhed his pilgrimage on earth, is abundantly acknowledged by the Jewiſh Doctours themſelves who generally pitch upon that narrow compaſſe of time, whereunto all the ſaid particularities agree for the time or ſeaſon; wherein their *Meſſiah* was to come and appeare unto them. For brevity ſake I omit particular citations from them, for the confirmation hereof: if any man doubts of the truth of what is aſſerted in this behalf, let him read the 29, chapter of the forementioned learned treatiſe entituled *of the trueneſſe of religion*, for his ſatiſfaction: here he ſhall find a very great and remarkeable conjunction of the judgments and learning of this nation in the aſſeveration of this truth.

[a] Dan. 9. 26.

[b] Dan. 9. 25, 26.

[c] Dan 927.

To give inſtance in many more particulars of Scripture prediction beſides theſe, as well in relation unto the perſon of *Chriſt*, and other things appertaining to him, as otherwiſe, which hath been countenanced from heaven, and honoured by God, with ſutable events, is matter of a very eaſy undertaking: and the performance (I conceive,) would be more burthenſome to the reader, to peruſe, then to the undertaker to accompliſh. The truth is, that the body of the Scriptures is enlivened with the ſpirit of prophecy (allmoſt) throughout: and if we were capable of, or narrowly intent upon ſuch obſervations, we might (I conceive) be able upon ſufficient ground to ſay,

that

that there is ſcarce any day paſſeth over our heads, wherein ſome remarkeable prediction, or other, contained in the Scriptures, doth not bring forth, and is delivered of ſome Truth of importance, and concernment unto the world.

Let us then briefly conſider, whether the demonſtration in hand, be any whit beneath that great concluſion, the proofe and evidence whereof, is the prize for which we run. *viz.* that the Scriptures iſſue and flow from that inexhauſt fountain of wiſdome and knowledge, which is, by interpretation, *the only Wiſe God.*

Let them bring forth (ſaith God,) expoſtulating with his people about the vanity of *Idolls*) *and ſhew us what ſhall happen: let them ſhew the former things what they be, that we may conſider them, and know the end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that yee are Gods.* &c. clearely implying, that to be able to foreſee, and poſitively to declare events and occurrences, of things meerly contingent: (for ſuch as are neceſſary are as good as preſent in their cauſes) at a long diſtance of time, before they come to paſſe, argueth ſpeciall communion with him, who from the mountaine of eternity taketh a proſpect of the whole tract and extent of time at once, with all that infinite variety of motions, actions, generations, corruptions, and of whatſoever riſeth, or falleth, or that any waies, or upon any terms cometh to paſſe, within the whole compaſſe and continuance thereof. This is no more then what the more ingenuous and conſidering ſons of nature themſelves doe acknowledge. The *Platonique* Philoſohers generally teach and confeſſe, that *the foretelling of things which are yet afar off, cannot be done either by art, or by nature, but only by inſpiration from God.* This is the expreſſe doctrine of *Porphyrius* himſelf (that firſt-born enemy to *Chriſtian* Religion) It is true, ſometimes by the juſt judgment of God upon thoſe, who out of vanity of minde, and contempt of himſelf, will needs be the Devils cuſtomers for the commodity, which God will not afford them, knowing it to be no waies uſefull or beneficiall unto then (I mean; the knowledge of things to come, relating to their condition in this preſent world,) the Divell is permitted either to doe or Iſa. 41. 22, 23.

to procure execution to be done upon such persons, according to the tenour of his own predictions unto them. An instance hereof we have in the history of *Saul*, who making the witch of *Endor*, his *Mediatrix* to the *Devill* to learn from him what should become of him, being now upon an ingagement in battle with the *Philistines*, received from him first the knowledg of his sad disaster approaching, and the day following, the disaster it self. In the *French* history we read of a wizard; who foretold Duke *Beron* of his death by a *Burgundian*; and did the execution himself. As for the usuall answers, (sirnamed Oracles) given out of old, by the Devill, (called by his Prophets and Clients, by the name of *Apollo*) being compared with the Prophecyes recorded in the Scriptures, there *appears* (one saith) *as much difference betweene them, as is between the discretion of a wise man, and the tittle tattle of a foole.* Yea the ambiguities; amphibologies, crosse-sensedneſſe, and volatile meanings, continually found in these answers, occasioned the giving of the by-name, Λοξίας *i.* Thwarter, or crooked-speaker, unto the Devill-god, the authour of them, by the heathen themselves. And if we shall measure, or judge of these Oracles or predictions of the Devill, by a rule in *Aristotle* (and this very rationall and streight) which saith; that, τὸ μὴ ἓν σημαίνειν, ἓν σημαίνειν ἐστίν, *i. not to signifie one thing*, (determinately) *is to signifie nothing at all*; then were they neither Oracles, nor predictions indeed; but only confused noyses, or sounds of words, without sense or signification. As for the prediction of *Astrologers*, and of all those who have made profession of the Prophetique art upon any other terms, or grounds whatsoever, they have long since, through the long experienced vanity in them, exposed their Authours and professours partly to the neglect, partly to the just censures of all considering and understanding men. Whereas the spirit of Prophecy, which hath now for some thousands of years together, spoken out of the Scriptures unto the world, gaineth interest, Reverence, and authority in the judgments of such men, daily more and more.

What may be taken in by knowledge, and given out in prediction, by the help of nature, and the narrow observation

of

of her motions and course, in all her respective waies, before she brings forth, is of no consideration at all, to check the evidence and power of the Demonstration in hand: Because such events, which depend upon naturall causes, working by the known rules of necessity, are interpretatively present, and not future, when their causes are in being and before us. And besides, such events as these, being, nothing else but the issues and productions of nature, are of a quite differing nature, and consideration from the greatest part of those, the propheticall discovery whereof, the spirit of prophecy in the Scriptures, thought worthy of himself: whose chiefe ingagement in this kind is, plainly and distinctly to foreshew, such particularities of events, which depend, partly upon the will of God (otherwise secret, and inaccessible to the understandings of men) partly also upon the wills of men; and this, many years before they do so much as bud, or begin to put forth, from any cause producing them. An experienced and skillfull gardiner, may possibly, upon the first and smallest appearance above ground that can be imagined, of severall kinds of hearbs from their respective seeds, sown in your garden, tell you what manner of herbs, and of how many kindes you may expect for your vse, by such or such a time, or season of the yeare; which another man who hath not been versed in such observations, cannot doe: but if you bring this gardiner, as skilfull as he is, to a bed, or peece of ground not yet sown, your self not yet resolved with what kindes of seeds to sow it, all the skill he hath will not enable him to tell you, what hearbs you shall gather from thence: he that shall clearly and upon grounds informe you of this before hand, had need be *Mary Magda'lens gardiner* (spoken of Joh. 28 15.) In like manner, when events of things naturall, begin to work in their causes, though at never such a distance from the full production and accomplishment of them, an exact naturalist, who for a long time together, hath with much intention of minde, and cleernesse of observation, accompanied nature in her retired and secret progresses and paths, may propheſie of many of her works, some considerable space of time before she bringeth them forth, to the admiration (haply) of ordinary men, whose educa-

tion, and courſe of life have looked quite another way. Yea morall Philoſophers and wiſe ſtatiſts, who are well ſtudied in the actions, manners, diſpoſitions and tempers of men, and have converſed (in hiſtory) with the moſt underſtanding and knowing perſons of all ages, and of all countries and nations, about all the memorable occurrences, changes, and of affairs, that took place in their reſpective generations, together with the ſpecialties of occaſions and means producing them; may poſſibly, from a prudentiall contemplation partly of the preſent juncture of things in a ſtate or Common-wealth, partly of the inclinations, and humours, moſt predominant in the generalitie of the people, foreſee, in a way of pregnant conjecture, and ſuch as ſeldome miſcarrieth, what will befall this State or Common-wealth; either to the advancement, or to the detriment of it, within ſuch, or ſuch a time. But to predeclare particularities of events, whilſt there is yet nothing at all in being, any waies likely to produce them, or to contribute towards their being, yea ſuch events, which depend upon the meere motions, and acts of the wills of particular perſons yet unborn, and to the effecting whereof, when they are born, they cannot be led, neither by any common principle or ſuggeſtion of reaſon, nor yet by any evill inclination, or corrupt principle incident to the natures of men; to predeclare (I ſay) and give perfect and diſtinct knowledge unto the world, of ſuch events of theſe long before their coming to paſſe, is an undoubted and indiſputable character of *one greater then Solomon* in wiſdome; even of him, who was able to read the long roll of time from the one end of it unto the other; whileſt it was yet folded up; and whoſe knowledge prevented all, and all manner of beings whatſoever, but his own. Now this kind of prediction being frequently found in the Scriptures, and accordingly juſtified by a conſtant correſpondency of event (both which have been ſealed for truths in the former part of this Demonſtration) doth it not make it plain *robbery* either for men, or Angels, to count or claime themſelves the Authours of them?

A Fourth Demonſtration or Argument (of that head we are now upon) to prove the Scriptures to be from God, *i.* the

the consideration of the great and wonderfull effects, which God hath formerly, and continues still daily to produce and work in the world by the Scriptures, and particularly by the Gospel, and the ministery of it. We spake somewhat to this point, in laying down our Arguments of the first kinde, when we opened that inward vertue and power of the Scriptures, to work upon the hearts and consciences of men: somewhat likewise of a like tendency and import was delivered, in the unfolding of our second argument of this latter kinde, when we spake of the wonderfull successe which the Gospel had, against the wickednesse and unbeliefe of the world, in the first expedition and going forth of it from *Jerusalem*. In consideration whereof we shall be the more briefe in our present demonstration. But doubtlesse great and marvellous are the works, and effects, which the Gospel (or if you will, which God by the Gospel) hath both heretofore wrought, yea and still continueth working from day to day in the world; you have heard how gloriously it hath triumphed, over the darknesse of this world, with all the power thereof; the old, inveterate, and rooted superstitions and idolatries, the wickednesses and impieties, the prophanesse, Atheisme, and unbelief, which ruled and raged with an high hand, in all places of the world amongst the sons and daughters of men; yea how it hath magnified it self in the hearts and consciences of men and women, against the faces and frowns of *the terrible ones*; against the most cruell and bloudy edicts of Emperours, Kings, and States, yea, and against the most furious executions of them.

We shall (for the present) insist only upon three things, to give authority and strength to the Demonstration in hand. First, we shall shew you what those great and marvellous works are (or at least, some of the principall, and most considerable of them) which the Gospel at this day worketh in the world. Secondly, we shall consider the frequency of them. Thirdly, (and lastly) we shall ponder the nature and quality or greatnesse of them, that so we may the better see or judge, what evidencing or demonstrative power they have, in respect of that great conclusion, the Truth whereof we labour to evince and evidence unto you.

First,

Rom. 1. 5. First, The great and marvellous works, which the Gospel, or God by the Gospel, performes, and produceth from day to day in the world, are these (with their fellows) First the subduing of the hearts, and mindes, and consciences of men, to a setled perswasion and beliefe of the Truth of supernaturall things: of things which are very remote from the common thoughts and apprehensions of men, and which are very difficult to be beleeved; (the beleeving whereof the Scripture calls, *obedience unto the Faith*) as for example; that *Iesus Christ* should be both God and man in one and the same person, that he should be born of a virgin, that he should be willing to die, especially upon those terms of shame and torment, for the benefit of others. That he should rise againe from the dead the third day; that believing these things concerning him, should be a means of the justifying of a sinfull man, in the sight of God, and so of bringing him into an estate of immortall blessednesse and glory (with some others of like consideration) the Gospel (I say) fights against the naturall unbeliefe of these things in the hearts and judgments of men, and breakes the stifnesse and stubbornesse of their diffidence, into a rationall, free, and willing consent unto the truth of them. Many who despised and rejected the great things of the Gospel, formerly, as things devised by men; now imbrace them as the oracles of God. The Gospel anoints mens eyes with such a precious and soveraigne *eye-salve*, that it makes them able to see cleernesse of truth in those things, wherein they saw nothing but darknesse and doubtfullnesse (yea falshood and untruth to their apprehensions.)

2. Another work of the Gospel great and marvellous also (as we shall shew presently) is, the taking off of mens hearts from the world; the cooling and quenching of the inordinate heat, wherewith men naturally, and according to the course of the world in every place, are wont to burn in desires after the things of the earth, and the contentments of the outward man. When the heart of a man and the world are so close knit and incorporated, as it were, together, that they are become one flesh (as the Apostle speaks of the adulterer, and adultéresse, in reference to the act

act of their wickednesse) the Gospel many times comes and gets in betweene, divides, and separates the one from the other, throws the one one way, as it were towards the East, and the other, another way, towards the West: and so keeps them asunder for ever. It falls upon the heart and soule like lightning, and melts down the great mountaine of the world there, and makes it become a plain. It dissolves the sorceryes and inchantments, wherewith the world is wont to bewitch the mindes and affections of men, and to binde the facultyes and powers of the soule, so that these shall act nothing to the recovery of them from this miserable bondage. The spirit which is in the Gospel being *greater* and *stronger, then he that is in the world, takes away his weapons from him*, and binds him, and then *divideth his spoiles*. This kinde of work, it wrought upon *Zacheus*, when it so far looſed those iron chains, wherewith his soule had of a long time been fast bound to this present world, that at once he gave away unto the poore, *the one halfe of his Kingdome*; I mean, of those *goods*, which he had been long in getting and gathering together; yea and further offered and ingaged himself to make a foure-fold restitution, of whatsoever he had unjustly wrung from any man. Luk. 19 8.

3. Another great work of the Gospel is, it makes men self-deniers. Men naturally are deniers of other men, yea and of God and Christ; but great confessours and zealous assertours of themselves: they stand naturally so deeply and intirely devoted and affected to themselves, and the promoting of their own good (as they call good) that in the prosecution and pursuance hereof, they take little, or no notice of, but tread and trample upon, the due interests and rights, both of God and men; as if they were dead, or not in being, and so had no right to any thing, and as if themselves were only alive. This I mean, by denying God, and other men, and by confessing or asserting themselves. But now the Gospel, when that comes upon men in the power of it, it batters in peeces, and grinds to powder this principle and inclination in them; and makes them denyers of themselves, and confessours or acknowledgers of God and men, yea of all men: it makes them able and willing, to neglect and trample upon their own in-

 terests,

tereſts, ends, and deſires, when they cannot be promoted and carried on, with the preſervation of all the rights and priviledges both of God and men. It teacheth men to ſeeke themſelves and their own good, not in oppoſition to (which naturally they are inclin'd unto) but only in conjunction with the glory of God, and good of all men. By the tenour of which practiſe and courſe, they looſe, or hide themſelves as it were in the croud, and drown their own intereſts in the intereſts and good of many. This operation of the Goſpel was cleerly ſeen upon *Paul*. *Even as I* (ſaith he) *pleaſe all men for their good, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be ſaved.* When he ſaith, *not ſeeking mine own profit*, he doth not mean or imply, that he did not pleaſe himſelf, or *ſeek his own profit, ſimply*, or not at all; but he *ſought not his own profit* by it ſelf, or apart from, or out of the way of the *profit*, that great *profit* of other mens ſalvation. For certainly *Paul pleaſed himſelf*, to the higheſt degree of pleaſure and contentment that he knew how to doe, in pleaſing all men, and ſeeking the *profit* of all men; and had an eye to his own benefit and *profit*, as well as to the profit of all men: as he expreſſeth himſelf elſewhere: *And this I doe* (ſaith he, ſpeaking of that very courſe of his we ſpeake of, *viz.* his *pleaſing all men*, or *ſeeking the profit of all men*,) *And this I doe for the Goſpel ſake, that I may be partaker thereof with you*; Ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι. *Paul* had a deſire to partake himſelf of the benefit and bleſſedneſſe of the Goſpel; as well as that other men ſhould partake of them. But this was his glory and crown, that he did not deſire to partake of them alone, but in conjunction with other men; yea his deſire to partake of the Goſpel upon theſe terms (I mean with company, and in conjunction with others) was ſo ſtrong & potent in him, that he made orts (as we uſe to ſay) of all his inferiour intereſts, and contentments, in the world, and which related to his outward man, for the promoting and obtaining of it.

1 Cor. 10. 33.

1 Cor. 9. 23.

4. Another great work of the Goſpel, is the changing of mens hearts and diſpoſitions; the turning as it were, the courſe and frame of nature upſide-down within them: the fulfilling of thoſe and ſuch like propheſies in *Iſaiah* (in a ſpirituall ſenſe) where he ſaith that *in the Wilderneſſe, Waters*

*ſhall*

*ſhall breake out, and ſtreames in the deſert: that the parched ground, ſhall become a poole, and the thirſty land, ſprings of waters; that in the habitations of dragons* (which commonly are the hotteſt, ſandy, and moſt barren places) *there ſhould be graſſe with reeds and ruſhes,* And again, *I will plant in the wilderneſſe the Cedar, the Shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oyle tree; I will ſet in the deſert the firre-tree, the pine and the box-tree together.* And in another place, *In ſtead of the thorn ſhall come up the firre-tree, and in ſtead of the brier ſhall come up the myrtle tree* &c. Such a kind of change as theſe, doth the Goſpel make in the natures, and ſpirits, and hearts of men, When it firſt comes unto them, it findes them like ſo many wilderneſſes and deſerts, full of thorns and briers, but no fruit-bearing, uſefull, or pleaſant tree growing in them; full of diſtempers, luſts, vile affections, corruptions, and inclinations unto evill, as covetouſneſſe, uncleanneſſe, pride, deceit, cruelty. *&c.* but no holy or righteous affection at all; but the Goſpel comes, and makes *Waters to breake out in theſe deſerts, makes the firre-tree and the myrtle-tree to grow in ſtead of thorns and briers, i.* it poures the grace of God, and ſheds the influences of heaven upon the ſoules of men; by means whereof in ſtead of thoſe diſtempers, and baſe affections, of pride, covetouſneſſe, uncleaneſſe *&c,* there ſpring up holy affections and heavenly diſpoſitions, as of love, meekneſſe, purity, chaſtity, humility, liberality, *&c.* theſe take place in men, and fill the ſoule. This effect of the Goſpel, was very viſible in the *Corinthians,* as the Apoſtle deſcribes their different eſtates or diſpoſitions, before, and after, the Goſpel had to do with them. *And ſuch were ſome of you,* viz. *fornicatours, idolatours, adulterers, effeminate, covetous, drunkards, revilers,* &c. *but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God.*

Iſa. 35. 6, 7. 41. 19. Iſa. 55 13. 1 Cor. 6. 11.

5. Another effect of the Goſpel, great and wonderfull alſo, is that which the Apoſtle *Paul,* notably deſcribes and ſets out, 2. *Cor.* 10. *viz. the pulling down of ſtrong holds, and caſting down of imaginations, and every high thing which exalts it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt,* There are in men, ſome by nature

2 Cor. 10 4, 5.

nature, and ſome from *Sathan*, and ſome by acquiſition from other men by means of much converſe in, and with, the world, certaine principles or reaſonings, certain imaginations, ſuppoſitions, or apprehenſions of things; which are firſt ſaid to be *ſtrong holds*; becauſe as men, when they are in *ſtrong holds*, as in forts or caſtles well made, ſtrongly fortified, and ſufficiently provided otherwiſe, think they are in ſafety; ſo whileſt men frame their counſells, deſignes and actions, according to the import and tenour of certaine rules and principles within them, which they confidently judge to be full of wiſdome and truth, they verily think they are in a ſafe and bleſt condition, they are under protection, and out of the reach of any great danger And therefore ſuch imaginations or principles as theſe in men, are called *ſtrong holds*. Firſt, they are ſtrong in their opinion and apprehenſion; they are confident they will ſecure and protect them: And ſecondly, they are ſtrong in reſpect of that difficulty of gaining them, or the reſiſtance which they uſually make againſt thoſe, that ſhall attempt the demoliſhing of them. Again Secondly, theſe *imaginations*, principles, or *high things* in men, are ſaid *to exalt or magnifie themſelves againſt the knowledge of God*; becauſe men out of a long-habituated and fearleſſe confidence of the truth of them, are hereby ſtrengthned ſecurely to deſpiſe the knowledge of God, which the Goſpel holds forth and avoucheth for truth, as being oppoſite unto them, and inconſiſtent with them. Now the Goſpel notwithſtanding comes, and encounters, and fights againſt theſe ſtrong holds, theſe high imagnations in men; and attempts the battery and the ſhaking of them, firſt, on the one ſide, then on the other, diſcovering and evincing to the judgements and conſciences of men, that there is vanity, and extreame danger in them, in this reſpect, and in that, and in a third, and perhaps in many more: and by this time they begin to ſhake and bow, and ſtand more looſely, and weakly in the judgements and mindes of men, and with much more neerneſſe to a rejection. But by that time the Goſpel and the wiſdome thereof, have made a cleer repreſentation of their own principles, in oppoſition to them, and have argued theſe throughly, and haveleft no objection or thought againſt them in the mindes of men unanſwered,

anſwered, nor any place for any more to be made, now are the ſtrong holds pulled down, *and the imaginations and high things, which exalted themſelves againſt the knowledge of God, caſt to the ground; and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt*; Men will deale by their former principles and thoughts, as *Iſaiah* prophecyes the *Iſralites* ſhould do by their idolatrous implements, when God ſhould open their eyes to ſee the abhomination of Idols. *Ye ſhall defile alſo the covering of thy graven images of ſilver, and the ornament of of thy molten images of gold: thou ſhalt caſt them away as a menſtrous cloath; thou ſhalt ſay unto it, get thee hence.* In like manner, when the Goſpel by the light thereof, hath diſcovered and made men able to comprehend the darkneſſe of theſe former notions, and conceptions, they deale by them as *Amon* did by his ſiſter *Thamar* (the ſinfullneſſe of his act only excepted) after he had committed folly with her: the text ſaith, that *he hated her exceedingly; ſo that the hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater then the love wherewith he had loved her, ſaying unto his ſervant, put now this woman out from mee, and bolt the doore after her.* 2 *Sam.* 13.15,17. Iſa. 32.22.

An inſtance of this kind of effect of the Goſpel, in one particular, is clearly ſeen in *Paul* himſelf. *I verily thought* (ſaith he) *within my ſelf that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of Nazareth. I verily thought*, here was a *ſtrong hold* in *Paul*, he *thought*, and he *thought* verily, *i.* confidently beleeved without all mixture of feare or doubting, that *he ought to doe many things* — *i.* that it was his dnty, and ſo for the advancement of his happineſſe, and obtaining more grace and favour with God, *to doe many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth. i.* to be active and reſolute, to goe on in the face of all oppoſition or diſcouragements, to lay the name and honour of *Jeſus of Nazareth* in the duſt. Even as many amongſt us *thinke verily that they ought to doe many things*, to be very active, vigorous, and reſolute, againſt the deare ſervants of God, under the names of Schiſmaticks and Separatiſts amongſt us, and never to give over, though they ſhould be ſeven years in effecting it, till they have laid their ſpirituall liberties, comforts, and peace in the duſt; yea and ſaid unto Act. 26 9.

[a] 1 Sam. 26. 19. them (in *Davids* phraſe) *go and ſerve other Gods*, [a] Doubt-
they thinke verily, that they ſhall ingratiate themſelves in heaven by ſuch an ingagement as this, and performe a ſervice of a very choiſe acceptance with God. But as the Goſpel and the ſpirit that works in it, *caſt down that imagination* we ſpake of in *Paul*, and made it an abhomination and abhorring to his ſoule, yea and planted another directly oppoſite unto it, *viz.* this, that *he ought to do many things*, yea all he could, for *the name of this Jeſus*: ſo may there a day of ſuch a gracious viſitation dawn upon the men we ſpeak of, from God, wherein the Goſpel ſhall *throw down* with an high hand, that dark and dangerous *imagination*, by the ducture and guidance whereof, their hearts and their handes are lifted up together (and that to a ſtrange height) to reach the moleſtation of the Saints, and the ruines of their liberties; and in ſtead thereof, put another principle into them which will lead them a contrary courſe, and enlarge them mightily to *build up* the liberties and comforts, which now they deſtroy. It is ſaid of *Abraham*, that *againſt hope* (or rather, παρ ἐλπίδα, beſides hope) *he beleeved in hope, whereby he became the father of many nations.* My Bre-
Rom 4. 18. thren, let us put our ſelves, and our hearts to it to the uttermoſt, to imitate him herein; I mean, beſides hope, to beleeve in hope, that great work of God we ſpeak of: we may by the means of it, become the ſons of ſuch an acceptance and favour with God that we may *prevaile with men alſo*, and turne their *gall and wormwood*, into *hony*, and the *hony-comb*. This for a fifth gteat effect of the Goſpel.

6. A Sixth is; the abaſing of the proud, the caſting of ſecure, careleſſe, fearleſſe and prophane men into the *den of Lions*, into the midſt of the raging, terrifying, and devouring fears, and expectations of hell fire. It is an expreſſion of God himſelf unto *Job*: *Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abaſe him: Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked*
Job 40. 11, 12, 13, 14. *in their places, hide them in the duſt together, and binde their faces in ſecret. Then will I alſo confeſſe unto thee, that thine own right hand can ſave thee. i.* that thou art God, as I am. Now (my Brethren) the *Goſpel many times caſts abroad the rage of its*
*wrath*;

*wrath*; it *beholds* the proud, disdainfull, and secure ones, that stand in the presence of it, and *it doth abase them, and bring them low*; it *gives them ashes in stead of* their *beauty*, and sackcloth in stead of their joy and gladnesse. It lades their consciences with chains of fears, and transforms their pomp and grandure in the world, into tremblings. As *Paul* (the poore prisoner *reasoned of righteousnesse, temperance*, and *judgment* to come, *Fœlix* the judge, though sitting upon the seat of his power, with a guard of honour and strength about him,) *trembled*. But of this before. Act 24 25.

7. Lastly, Another great effect and work of the Gospel is; it lifts men up unto heaven, and that sometimes out of the nethermost hell: it rescues the souls and spirits of men out of the hand of violent fears, and the most devouring and raging terrours: it makes *the bones*, which sin *had broken, to rejoyce*, and the faces of many to shine *like the face of an Angel*, which before had *gathered* the *blackness* of hell. And what (indeed) is the ministery of it from day to day unto many, *but life from the dead?* The Jaylor (spoken of *Acts* 16.) being surprized with such a desperate fit of fear and astonishment, that *he drew out his sword*, and was ready to have *killed himself* with it, was very suddainly, by the vertue and power of Evangelicall applications ministred by the hand of *Paul*, not only recovered out of the jawes of this death, but in a way of surplussage over and above his cure, had a new addition of spirituall joy made unto him, such as his soul had never known before. But this point also (I remember) we have had in consideration formerly. Act. 16. 34.

Consider we now (in a word) the nature and import of these great effects, that we may see and understand, whether they do not teach, and that with authority and power, the Scriptures parentage and descent from God. *Nicodemus*, by considering the great works and miracles which *Christ* wrought, came demonstratively to conclude, that he was from God. *Rabbi, We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man could doe the miracles thou doest, except God were with him.* In like manner, if we shall draw neer, and consider narrowly, how great and wonderfull those works are, especially some of them, which (as we have heard) are wrought by the Scriptures, and the Gospel; Ioh. 3. 2.

we may come, nay, we cannot lightly but come, to a ſtable and grounded certainty and belief in our ſelves, that doubtleſſe they alſo are from God, For (certainly) no learning, wiſedom, or doctrine, *could doe* ſuch things, *except God were with them.*

Firſt, How great a thing it is, that the judgements and conſciences of men, ſhould be ſubdued under ſuch myſterious, and ſupernaturall Truths, ſo farre remote from the thoughts and apprehenſions of men, as many of thoſe are, which are held forth by the Goſpel; yea as thoſe are, which are the ſpirit and life, the heart and ſoul thereof? As that *Jeſus Chriſt* one reputed a Carpenters ſon in the world, neglected, yea, hated by the great, the wiſe, and prudent ones of his generation, deſpiſed, ſcorn'd, ignominiouſly uſed, put to death as a malefactor and evil doer, ſhould, all theſe notwithſtanding, be the Son of God; that he ſhould be born of a virgin, that he ſhould riſe again from the dead, that by dying he ſhould purchaſe, not only a perfect remiſſion of ſins, but an everlaſting eſtate in bleſſedneſſe and in glory, for all thoſe that ſhould beleeve in him, *&c.* that men (I ſay) ſhould be carried over ſuch a great gulf of fears and doubtings, of objections, of unlikelihoods, *&c.* into the boſome of ſuch Truths; eſpecially that this ſhould be done with ſo much frequency, and in ſo many inſtances, and examples of thoſe, that have been, and are ſtill from day to day thus carried over, argues the preſence and ingagement of a mighty ſpirit indeed, in, and about thoſe truths. How much more, if we ſhall further add, that the believing of theſe things by men, is mightily oppoſed, not only with objections and difficulties, which very ſeemingly, and with the appearance of a ſtrong hand, riſe up againſt the truth of them, but by worldly intereſts alſo without end, as eaſe, credit, pleaſures, eſtates, friends, *&c.* all which are mighty diſſwaſives unto men, from ſo much as an effectuall ſearching after them, and the truth of them; and this in two reſpects; Firſt, as the very time and labour of mind which a man muſt beſtow, and undergoe in ſuch a ſearch after them, is contrary to mens eaſe, and pleaſures, and otherwiſe like to ſtreighten them, in many worldly occaſions. Secondly, as a mans being obſerved and taken notice of, for being ſtudious and ſeriouſly engaged in that kind, is like to bring trouble upon his head,

and

and moleſtation from the world, to gain him the loſſe of friends, credit, eſtate, *&c.* even as much, as if he did ſeriouſly and fully beleeve, what in this caſe he is but inquiring after.

Again ſecondly, If we ſhall conſider thoſe other effects of the Goſpel that were mentioned, as, the taking off of mens hearts from the world, the making of men deniers of themſelves, the changing of mens tempers and diſpoſitions, *the caſting down of* their *imaginations, and bringing every thought in* them *into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt*, &c. theſe, even every one of them, from the greateſt to the leaſt, and much more all of them put together, and laid in conſideration with the frequency of their production in men, is as cleer an evidence, and confirmation, that thoſe Scriptures, that wiſdom, that doctrine, by which they are wrought, are from God, as the ſight of the ſun being riſen, is an evidence that the night and the darkneſſe thereof, are paſt. The glory of ſuch works as theſe, is as the glory of the word of God. The ſpirituall and moſt intimous nature and property of them, ſheweth, that means or cauſe, by which they are produced, to be full of his ſpirit, who is as intimate and inward with men, as themſelves, or their own ſouls.

All the wiſdom, and writings, and learning that ever was in the world beſides, cannot ſhew ſo much as the appearance, or face of ſuch a generation of proſelytes, or children, as the Goſpel can; and not ſo much as one perſon of like noble principles, and inward parts with thouſands of thoſe, who are the genuine and right-born offspring hereof. The talleſt and beſt-grown men, that ever ſprang from the root of *Plato, Ariſtotle, Seneca, Plutarch*, or any other of thoſe ancient Fathers of ſecular learning, were but a race of dwarfes, or pygmies in reall worth, and true excellencie of ſpirit, being compared with a great part of that heroique progeny, whoſe hearts and ſpirits came by the way of a ſecond birth, out of the loins and bowels of the Goſpel. Yea the whole fraternity of this parentage, breaths part and fellowſhip in the Divine nature it ſelf.

A fifth demonſtration (of that houſe we are now ſurveying) which reacheth, and takes faſt hold of the ſame concluſion

with the former, *viz.* that the Scriptures and the Gospel, are from God, is the consideration of the tenour or manner of the government of the world, and of the workings of the hearts and spirits of men of all kindes and conditions in it. That exact conformity and agreement, which both the one and the other hold with the descriptions, reports and assertions of things in the Scriptures, and in the Gospel, doth cleerly demonstrate and evince these to be from God.

1. For the government of the world: How are all things carried, ordered, and managed herein, as well in a permissive, as in an active or executive way, according to the model and plat-forme of the Scriptures?

1. For the permissive part of this Government, how are things permitted and suffered to come to passe, and to take place in the world, with all possible exactnesse according to the representation of the Scriptures in that behalf? This we shall consider chiefly in these foure particulars: First in the frequent infirmities and miscarriages of the Saints. Secondly, in the sufferings of the Saints from the men of this world. Thirdly, in the relapses and declinations of great multitudes of forward, and sometimes seemingly zealous professours, into ways of loosnesse, some of worldlinesse, some of pleasures, yea some into ways of persecution it self. Fourthly (and lastly) in the manifest perishing of the generality, or farre greatest part of men, through the lusts of the flesh, ignorance, and unbeliefe.

1. We know, and too too frequent experience informeth us, that the Saints, and good men, are oft left unto themselves, to the weaknesse of their hearts, and vanity of their mindes: in which cases they are like *Sampson*, when his hair was cut, who was then *but like other men*; and quitted himself with no more strength or courage against his enemies, then ordinary men did; and was taken prisoner by the *Philistims*. Even so many times it is with the Saints and servants of God themselves; they are overcome with temptations, and faulter and stumble, and do unworthily, after the manner of the world round about them, and not like unto themselves: they step out of the

the ways of grace, into the ways of the pride, the covetuouſneſſe, the unjuſtice, the uncleaneſſe, the raſhneſſe and inconſiderateneſſe, the fearfullneſſe and baſeneſſe of the world. Now ſuch permiſſions as theſe on Gods part, anſwer exactly thoſe permiſſive diſpenſations of his, which are held forth in many places of the Scriptures. *Abraham* that great beleever, and *Father* of beleevers, was left unto himſelf; and then how did he faulter about *Sarah*? And ſo *Sarah*, when ſhe denied that ſhe laughed, ſo likewiſe *Simeon* and *Levi*, how did God leave them in the hand of a bloudy and revengfull paſſion: and how treacherouſly and cruelly did they deale with the poore men of *Sichem*? And ſo how were both they, and the reſt of the *Patriarchs* their brethren, tranſported with a paſſion of envy againſt their younger Brother *Joſeph*? even as many now (we hope Brethren in the faith; as they were both in the faith, and in the fleſh too, unto *Joſeph*) through envy, that God ſhould give better and richer viſions of himſelf unto theire younger Brethren (as they look upon them) then unto them, are ready to ſell them into the hands of the *Iſhmalites*, I mean to expoſe them to the rage and fury of the rude multitude. But this by the way, We might inſtance in many other of the Saints of God in this kinde, as in *Moſes*, *Aaron*, *Joſhua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, &c. who though they were Saints, yet being left by God to themſelves, they did like ſinners. This permiſſive providence of God (as hath been ſaid) manifeſteth it ſelf in the world, among the Saints in every place at this day: The greateſt enemies the Scriptures have, will be free enough to give teſtimony unto them in this behalfe.

2. As God ſometimes leaves his Saints in the hand of their ſpirituall enemies, tentations, and they do with them (in their kinde) *even what they liſt*; ſo otherwhile doth he leave them alſo in the hand of their outward, their bodily enemies, evil men, and they doe unto them ſometimes even what they liſt alſo (in their way,) they injure them, they oppreſſe them, they cruſh them, tread and trample them under their feet, as if there were none that look'd after them, or took any care what became of them. Our Saviours expreſſion is concerning *John* the

Mat.17.12. *Baptist*, that *they did unto him, even what they listed*; implying, that as Holy, and High in interest with God as *Iohn* was, yet did not God (as might in reason have been expected he would have done, considering how great a man *Iohn* was in his sight) interpose in the least, to hinder that shameless daughter of *Belial* (*Herodias* I mean) from having her revengfull will upon him by his death.

After the same manner, we see and heare daily, things acted and done in the midst of us; many holy and faithfull men, are misused and dealt with, according to the will and lusts of men that know not God,; they are suffered to goe as farre in misusing them, as their hearts desire: and there is none that opposeth them. They revile them, they beat them, they oppresse them they spoil their substance, they imprison them, they bring them before their judgment seats, and obtain cruell sentenees against them. Yea its more then to be feared, that there will be a more generall leaving of the Saints, to the lusts of their *Antichristian* enemies and persecutours, then hath been yet (at least of late) and that the date of this permissive providence of God, will not expire, till the great deliverer shall appear from the *mount Sion* of Heaven. Yea it appears from severall places of Scripture, that any appearance of God on the behalfe of his people in the times of this persecution, will be so rare, that they will generally be at the point, at which they, who were in the ship with *Paul*, in that dangerous voyage at sea, *Act.* 27. were, whenas neither Sun, nor Stars, appeared for many daies, and when in regard of the sore tempest that lay upon them, *all hope that they should be saved was taken away*. Nevertheless (saith our Saviour) *When the son of man cometh, shall he finde faith upon Earth?* viz. amongst his Saints; shall he find any expectation, any hope amongst them all, that ever they should be delivered? The expression seems to point at such a time of universall trouble and danger upon the Churches of Christ, wherein they shall all seeme to lie *covered* all over *with the shadow of death*; So that deliverance shall be thought as incredible a thing to them, as that plenty *in the gates of Samaria*, which *Elisha* prophecyed, in the time of an extream famine, was to the noble man *on whose hand the King of Israel leaned*. 2 Kings. 7.3.

Rev.15.5. Dan.9.21. Act.17.20. Luk.18.8.

And

And as he is not like to finde faith amongſt his friends his Saints, ſo neither is he like to finde feare in his enemies, upon the ſame ground, though his coming will bring both faith in abundance unto the one, and feare in abundance upon the other. See whether this conſtellation of truth, be not viſible in the Horizon of that Scripture, which the margent pointeth unto: I dare not ſtand the unfolding of it, at the preſent. Rev. 11. 10, 11, 12.

3. There is another ſtrange, and ſad veine of occurrences in the world, through the permiſſive providence of God, which is alſo exemplified and atteſted in the Scriptures: this is the *looking back* of many, who had put forth their hand *to the plough of Chriſt*; the turning head of many great profeſſours of religion upon their profeſſion. But *many* (ſaith our Saviour himſelf) *that are firſt, ſhall* [or rather will] *be laſt*; and *the laſt ſhall* [and will] *be firſt*. He doth not ſay, that now one, and then one, one in one age, and another in another, who are, or have been looked upon as marching in the very head of profeſſours toward heaven, will wheele quite off, and face about towards hell, but many ſuch (ſaith he) will doe it; many that have been the *head*, will turn to be the *taile*, of profeſſion. See further what the Scriptures ſpeak in this point, by the light of thoſe other places named in the margent. Mat. 19. 30. Mat. 24. 10. 13. 10, 11. 1 Tim. 5. 15.

Whether the world bringeth not forth children in abundance marked in the very forehead with this black brand of ſhame and ſorrow (I mean Apoſtacy) I refer you only to the experience of thoſe late daies of triall, which have gone over the head of this nation: Have not *the ſtars of the Heaven*, (old profeſſours I mean) *fallen to the Earth, even as a figtree caſteth her green figs when ſhe is ſhaken with a mighty wind?* [a] Have not theſe days been like the days of *Iſaiah*, wherein he complains, *that the faithfull city was become an harlot*; *it was* (ſaith he) *full of judgment, and righteouſneſſe lodged in it: but now murderers* [b]. The *thorns* and *briers*, wherewith God of late hath taught this kingdome, have ſo rent and torn the *ſheeps cloathing*, wherewith many great and violent pretenders to religion had garbed themſelves, that the wolf is now to be ſeen face to face. It is true (and the glory of *Chriſt* appears wonderfully in it) there is a [a] Rev 6 13. [b] Iſa. 1. 21.

[a] Gal.1.23. [b] Mat.19.30.

generation too risen up in the midst of the fire, which to this day burns in the very bowells of the land, a generation (I say) of the blessed Apostasie, wherein the great Apostle went before them, who at last forsook the *tents of ungodlinesse*, and came to preach that faith, which formerly he had destroyed, [a] that prediction of our Saviour (lately mentioned) *And behold there are last which shall be first*, [b] having brought forth many children unto us. But on the other hand, many also who had declared for the God of Heaven, by a long and loud profession, have now changed masters, and forsaking the tabernacle at *Shilo*, are gone to *Dan* and to *Beersheba* to worship.

4 (And lastly) There is nothing more evident, then that the generality of men perish daily, being taken captive by Sathan at his will, and led away by him in the chaines of sin and unbeliefe, unto destruction. How doth the world abound (almost) in every place, with those very kinde of sinners, *as fornicatours, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, theeves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners*! against whom the holy Ghost hath given this definitive and dreadfull sentence; *they shall none of them, inherit the kingdome of God*; 1 Cor.6.9,10.

This veyne also of the permissive providence of God, is cleerly delineated in the Scriptures. *Enter ye in at the straite gate* (saith our Saviour in a gracious advice unto his Disciples) *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that finde it.* Peruse the other Scriptures presented in the margent, you will finde them of like import, besides many others.

Mat. 7. 13.14. Rom.9.27. 1 Joh.5.19.

Again 2. for the government of the world in respect of the operative, or working providence of God; we shall finde a perfect correspondency and agreement betweene those things which the Scriptures speake concerning it, and the events and carriadges, the passages and comings of things *to passe* in the world. This we may consider in a threefold subject, or in things of a threefold consideration, first, in things naturall, secondly, in things morall, thirdly and lastly in things spirituall.

First,

First, For things naturall, about which the working providence of God we ſpeake of, is held forth, and repreſented unto us in the Scriptures, they are of two ſorts: either firſt, ſuch as are meerly naturall; or ſecondly, ſuch, which though they be in part, and in a ſenſe, naturall, yet they are in a ſuperiour conſideration, *judiciall* alſo (for we want a better term for our purpoſe) For the firſt of theſe, things meerly naturall, we know the Scriptures, even from the daies of *Moſes*, who was the firſt penman of them, gave knowledge as from the mouth of God himſelf, that there ſhould be ſeed-time and harveſt, *and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter; and that day and night ſhould not ceaſe.* Gen. 8.22.

And elſwhere the Scriptures ſpeak of a covenant which God hath made, either with, or concerning, the day, and ſo with, or concerning, the night, that the one ſhould ſucceed the other interchangeably, without variation: we ſee this covenant of God performed without any faultring or failing. It were eaſy to inſtance more particulars in this kinde. Jer. 33.20.

2. Take we knowledge how the Scripture portraitures that part of the providence of God, we ſpeak of the (executive or working providence of God,) in ſuch things, which I call, Judiciall; in which word I comprehend, as well thoſe occurrences and events of things which fall on the right hand, and make mens conditions in the world better, and more comfortable, as thoſe, which fall on the left hand, and are pœnall and afflictive unto men. Eccl 9.11.

Firſt, Concerning the indifferent befalling, as well of the one, as the other, upon all ſorts of men, without the exemption of any (I mean of any ſort of men, in reſpect of ſome or other particulars in every ſort) we know what the Scripture ſaith. *No man* (ſaith the wiſe man) *knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before him* (he means, either the *love* or *hatred* of God) *by all that is before him*, i. by any outward condition he is in, be it either a *neſt among the ſtars*, or a *ſeat upon the dunghill*. Of this his aſſertion he gives this reaſon (in the words following) *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean* &. The Holy ghoſt doth not ſpeak this *de ſingulis generibus*

*nerum* (as ſome uſe to diſtinguiſh) but *de generibus ſingulorum*; his meaning is not that *all things come alike* to all individuall and particular perſons; but to all, and every kind of perſons, in reſpect of ſome particulars in every kinde (as was ſaid.) How doe we ſee the contents of theſe lines viſibly acted, and put in execution from day to day in the world? If you ſee a righteous and holy man, one, or more, rejoycing in one place, if you will look but a little about you, you ſhall ſee a wicked and prophane man rejoycing in another.

And again if you ſee a wicked man, mourning or afflicted in one place, you may ſoone ſee a godly man in the ſame poſture and condition of ſorrow, in another; yea if we conſider the particular providences of God in outward things, which are the cauſes, either of the rejoycing, or of the heavineſſe, whether of the one ſort of men, or other; we ſhall finde a likeneſſe, or ſameneſſe in theſe alſo betweene them. Doe godly men proſper and thrive through the bleſſing of God, in the way of their callings, and gather ſubſtance? you may finde ungodly men, that proſper and thrive as faſt as they. Do ungodly men decline, and ſink in their outward eſtates, fall from riches to poverty in the world? we know that this is the portion of many godly men alſo. Have godly men any cauſe of comfort and joy in their relations, as in wives, children, ſervants, when theſe anſwer the deſire of their ſoules? you may finde men who know not God, that will match them in all theſe. So again, if you know wicked men that are of infirme and unhealthfull bodies, ſubject to troubleſome diſtempers, or painfull deſeaſes, as the gout, ſtone, or the like: you may finde in the generation of the righteous, thoſe that bear them company in theſe alſo. Yea and on the contrary, healthfullneſſe, and ſtrength, and activeneſſe of body, is a providentiall commodity or bleſſing, wherein many of the one ſort, and of the other, are partners. And (to inſtance only once more in this kinde,) is there any ſtrange hand of God, ſore and terrible, ſometimes laid upon wicked men, in any extraordinary judgment, as in any ſuddain or untimely death (as we call it) very grievous (it may be) for the manner of it, either upon themſelves, their children, or the like? you may finde examples of like providences

falling

falling even amongst the tents of the righteous also. Under this head may well be reduced that kinde of dispensation also, which the Scripture expresseth, vers. 11. of the forenamed Chapter. *I returned and saw vnder the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill.* The meaning is not as if *the race were* never *to the swift*, or *the battell* never *to the strong* &c. no nor yet as if the *race were* not more ordinarily and frequently *unto the swift*; and *the battel*, usually *to the strong*; *but* only to shew that *time and chance* (as it followeth) *happneth to them all* .*i.* that God reserveth a liberty unto himself to interpose when he pleaseth, and to umpire matters of event and successe, contrary to the Law, and common rule of second causes; with which notwithstanding he ordinarily concurreth, and so makes it altogether uncertain unto men, when he intendeth a variation or digression. And this kinde of digressive providence (as we may call it) sometimes ruleth in the affaires and concernments of men that are strangers unto God, as well as it doth at other times, in matters relating unto his Saints. And thus you see, how the providence of God in this particular, *viz.* in an indifferent dispensing of outward mercies and judgments to some of either sort of men, godly and ungodly, acteth and worketh in the world, with all possible exactnesse, according to the model presented unto us in the Scriptures. Eccl 9.6.11.

Again secondly, consider we how the same Providence acteth also in the world according to the expresse tenour of of the Scriptures in a way of judgment, with the same relation, not to some particulars only of either sort of men (as was shewd in the former branch) but to all of both sorts (at least in some degree to all of both sorts) who live together (as it were) within the sphere of the activitie, of each particular judgment. Our Saviour *Mat.* 24. foresheweth, that before *the end cones* (as he speaketh) .*i.* before the great day of his return unto the world for the judgment of it, *Nation, shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom, against Kingdom; and that there shall be famins, and pestilences, and earth-quakes in divers* Mat. 24.7.

 *places.*

*places.* We our ſelves experimentally know that ſuch things as theſe have been executed, and come to paſſe in the world ſome of them in our daies, and in thoſe parts of the world, where we have become. They that are verſed in Hiſtories, have the knowledge of many more particulars in this kinde. And how little difference ſuch judgments as theſe have put between godly men and others, within the line of their reſpective fallings, and prevailings, I appeal to the teſtimonies of all thoſe, who have been obſervers of ſuch things, and moſt narrowly watched the particular windings, and turnings, the leapings over, and the lightings on, the particular favours, and ſeverities of Providence under ſuch judgments.

Thirdly (and laſtly to this) As the Providenc of God expreſſeth it ſelf indifferently, as well in mercies, as in moſt kinde of judgements, to ſome of both ſorts of men, good, and bad; and again, in ſome perticular judgments, to all of both ſorts within a diſtance, and in both, moveth regularly according to the compaſſe of the Scriptures, ſo alſo doth it expreſſe it ſelf with a great deal of variaton and difference, to the one ſort of men, and to the other, indifferently conſidered (I mean taken in the main body and bulk of both) in it's ordinary diſpenſation; and this too with a perfect agreement unto the Scriptures. Theſe (we know almoſt in every place, eſpecially in the Goſpel ſpeak of the troubles, and ſorrows, and ſufferings which abide the Saints in this preſent world; as on the contrary, they give information, that the world ſhall generally have the better of it, and rejoyce when they ſhall mourne, *Verely, verely* (ſaith our Saviour to his Diſciples, and in them to all his Saints, in all their ſucceeding generations) *I ſay unto you, that ye ſhall weep and lament, but the world ſhall rejoice*; meaning, that this ſhould be, not the conſtant and uninterrupted, but farre the more frequent and ordinary eſtate and condition of either. Rejoycing amongſt the Saints, by reaſon of their outward condition in the world ſhould be but ſeldome, and for a ſhort ſeaſon: their *lucida intervalla*, ſhould be rare, and of a ſmall continuance, and in both reſpects, inconſiderable; in compariſon of the ſtanding proſperity, and the lifting up of the heads of their adverſaries (allmoſt with-

Joh. 16, 21.

without hanging down at any time) in the world. The Scripture (we know) hath many more paſſages and ſayings of like import. *Yea and all* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution:* i. their more conſtant and generall condition will be perſecution; and conſequently the condition of their enemies, the ungodly, will be ſuperiority and ſtrength in the world; or elſe they could not well be in a caſe to perſecute. Men muſt have a ſtock of power and ſtrength to command, that will drive a trade of perſecuton, to any purpoſe. So it is ſaid that *it Was given unto the beaſt to make War With the Saints, and overcome them.* God gave this *beaſt* ſtrength and power, and dominion, whereby he was enabled to trouble, vex, cruſh and ruine, the Saints of God, far and near. Whileſt it was the ſimple profeſſion of Chriſtianity, that expoſed men to perſecutions, and ſufferings from the world (as the caſe was till the daies of *Conſtantine*) there were but few hypocrites in the Church, for (as *Auſtin* well obſerves) hypocriſie did not encreaſe among Chriſtians, the till Name and profeſſion of Chriſtianity began to be honoured, and highly eſteemed in the world [a]. But however, whilſt it was the bare and naked profeſſion of Chriſtianity, that drew perſecution after it, all that join'd together in the profeſſion of it, whether hypocrites, or ſound, held together, expreſſed love and mutuall affections, one to another: the common hatred and perſecution wherein they were joint ſufferers from the world, was of a ſodering and cementing nature unto them, kept them in love and peace. But when upon *Conſtantines* coming to the Empire, being a Chriſtian, there was no more perſecuting for the profeſſion of Chriſtianity; for ſome ſhort ſeaſon, they that were Chriſtians indeed, and who had the power, as well as the form or profeſſion of Chriſtianity, were free from perſecution, injoying the ſame priviledge in this kinde, with thoſe that were formall and hypocriticall. And this great turn in the world is (I conceive) ſpoken of, *Rev.* 12.7,8,9,10,11,12. Where, upon the great battel that was fought *in Heaven*, between *Michael*, and his Angels, and the *dragon* and his, it is ſaid, that the *dragon* and *his prevailed not, nor were there place found any more in heaven*, i. (I conceive) the devil could never after prevail

2. Tim. 3. 12.

Rev. 13. 7.

[a] *Poſtquam in tanto culmine nomen cœpit eſſe Chriſtianum, crevit hypocriſis.*

Rev. 12 7,8,9.

with the world, at leaſt not with the *Roman* world (this Empire being elſewhere in this book of the *Revelation* expreſſed by the name of a world) to perſecute the name, or the bare profeſſion of Chriſtianity. So then after a while that *Conſtantine* was ſetled in the Empire, the profeſſion of Chriſtianity being now matter of honour and eſteem in the world, multitudes of perſons changed profeſſions, and would needs become Chriſtians; as we have amongſt us multitudes of drunkards, and twearers, and adulterers, and covetous, and perſecutours, that will needs be Chriſtians, profeſſours of Chriſtianity, as well as the beſt; the ſtate wherein they live, favouring a profeſſion of Chriſtianity. But it was not long, before theſe profeſſours of Chriſtianity, being multiplied to vaſt numbers, began to taſte the different ſpirits one of another, in their different walkings and applications in the world. Thoſe who were carnall, and worldly, and complied with men in place and power, to be countenanced and preferred in the world by them, were cenſured and reproved by the holy and heavenly converſation of thoſe, who neglected the great things of the world, and applied themſelves cloſe to the principles of their profeſſion, and the great things of eternity, ſo long, till they were no longer able to bear it; but the wickedneſſe and hypocriſie of their hearts brake out and diſcovered themſelves, by ſtirring up the powers of the world (I mean, the civil Magiſtrate, into whoſe affections they had wound themſelves by undue and unworthy applications) to perſecute the other, as being troubleſome and dangerous, in, and to, their ſtate. This (I conceive) is cleerly ſignified, *verſ.* 17. of the ſame chapter, where its ſaid, that *the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make warre with the remnant of her ſeed. The Dragon* (*i.* as all Expoſitours agree, the *devil*; yea the holy Ghoſt himſelf ſo interprets) was wrath with the woman *i.* with the Church of Chriſt, indefinitely conſidered as a body or party of men profeſſing the name of *Chriſt*, in the world. The devil *was wroth with this woman*: why? becauſe ſhe had now gained into her party, his greateſt vicegerent he had, for the time being, *viz.* the *Romane* Emperour: who till now had been the Son of his right hand, and made havock of Chriſtian profeſſion. But being ſorely galled and vexed

vexed at this, by way of revenge, he *went* (ſaith the viſion) *to make war with the remnant of the womans ſeed. He went* viz. cunningly or by ſtealth, and as if it had not been he, (for ſo the word elſewhere ſignifies, *Mat.*13.25.) *to make war with the remnant of the womans ſeed. i.* with that remainder of Chriſtian *Profeſſours*, who were ſincere, and ſtood cloſe to the rule and principles of their profeſſion. But whether or to whom did he go, *to make this war, with this remnant*, or ſmaller part *of the womans ſeed?* Doubtleſſe to the other part, who were the farre greater part hereof; I mean, to ſuch profeſſours of Chriſtianity, who being now come where the *hony* of this world lay thick *upon the ground*, gave over the cloſe chaſe and purſuit of the world to come, and beginning at firſt only to lick and taſt, of this hony; in time they came to love it ſo inordinately, that they fed foul upon it, yea and ſurfetted. Now the Devil wiſely apprehending that there is no ſort of men, likely to make better ſouldiers for his purpoſe, when he intends to levy war againſt thoſe that are Saints indeed, then formall and worldly profeſſours of Chriſtianity, who commonly pretend to Saint-ſhip with more impatiency of being queſtioned upon the point, then they; unto theſe, being now grown numerous, and many of them potent in the *Romane* State, he applieth himſelf, and by working upon ſuch corrupt principles in them, (as pride, covetouſneſſe, ambition, and eſpecially that root of bitterneſſe, that hatred, wherewith they ſecretly burned againſt their Brethren, who in uprightneſſe and faithfullneſſe of walking, were ſeparated from them) which made them obnoxious unto him, in a ſhort time he inflamed them into ſuch a malignity of ſpirit againſt that holy *remnant* (we ſpake of) of *the womans ſeed*, that they conſulted hard things againſt them, and ſought their ruine. But of this carnall, worldly and perſecuting party, ſhortly ſprang that great and famous enemy of *Chriſt*, and his Saints, the great perſecutour of the righteous generation (ſirnamed Antichriſt) and he being advanced and gotten up into his throne became like an whore, who *made all nations drunk with the Wine of the wrath* (or rather of the poyſon or intoxication, for ſo θυμος, many times ſignifies) *of her fornication* and allured *the Kings of the Earth*

*to commit fornication with her*: *i.* to quit the holy commandments, and ſpirituall worſhip of *Jeſus*, and to imbrace her adulterated religion; inſomuch that they all, all the ten Kings (for theſe only he calls the Kings of the Earth) amongſt whom the *Romane* Empire in the fall and breach of it, was
Reve 17. 17. divided, *gave their* Kingdomes, and their power to the beaſt, *i.* agreed as it were with him, not all of them to profeſſe every article or point in religion, which he profeſſeth (for there is few of theſe Kings, or Kingdomes, which doe this) but to joyn with him in perſecuting, or *making War with the remnant of the ſeed of the Woman, who keep the Commandements of Jeſus.* For whileſt Kings and States do this, they give their power to the *Beaſt*; and ſupport his Kingdome, and juſtify his proceedings againſt the Saints; what tenets in Chriſtian religion ſoever, in the mean time they profeſſe. He can willingly enough give liberty of conſcience in ſome doctrinalls, unto thoſe, who are willing to give the right hand of fellowſhip unto him in perſecuting the Saints, from whoſe faith only he fears the ruine of his kingdome.

It is true, this *Antichriſtian* Beaſt, with his great aſſiſtants, the Kings of the earth, in the heat of their bloudy expedition, their courſe of perſecuting the Saints, meet now and then with ſome ſtorms and tempeſts of bloud from heaven falling upon themſelves; the ſeven vialls have been, and are to be all poured out upon their quarters. But as they that came to apprehend Chriſt, though they met with a ſore bruſh in attempting their enterprize, they were beaten backward down to the earth by the word of Chriſt; yet would not give over ſo, but got up again, and went on with their work; So though that *ſcarlet Whore*, with her complices, who love to *make themſelves drunk with the Saints*, have been once and again ſorely rebuked from heaven, and have had their own bloud given them to drink: yet have not the wages made them out of love with their work, their ſtocks and ſtones which they worſhip and ſerve, have made them ſo *like unto them* (as *David* ſpeaketh) that they cannot ſee truth in any religion, but only in that, which will be their ruine. But this by the way.

The

The Second kinde of ſubject, or veyne of matters wherein the Scriptures holdeth forth the operating Providence of God, conſiſts of things morall; or of a morall conſideration. And herein alſo, we may clearly ſee the ſame things acted and done in the world, which are preſented unto us in the Scriptures. We ſhall mention only two particulars, and this very briefly, becauſe there is not much in them.

1. We know that the providence of God ſo ordereth and diſpoſeth between perſons and perſons, that ſome are of ſweeter tempers and diſpoſitions, and of far better principles in matters of morality, then others. Some are by nature ſo Cynicall and froward, and *Nabal* like, *that a man cannot ſpeak to them*; others, have that faireneſſe and deligtſomneſſe of carriage from God by nature, which *Abſolom* had by his diſſimulation, from the *Devil, when he ſpake every man fair that came to him:* So again, nature commends ſome of her children with gravity and ſoberneſſe of diſpoſition, witneſſe the Ruler who had kept all the commandements of the ſecond table from his youth; whereas ſhe diſparageth others, by ſetting them forth with a rough and careleſſe temper. Hereof that unrighteous *Judge*, ſpoken of *Luk.* 18. who *neither feared God, nor regarded man*, may yet be a competent witneſſe. The like is obſervable in many other diverſities, and contrarieties of tempers.

2. Sam. 15 5.

Luk. 18. 2.

2. The faithfull ſervants and children of God, many times ſpeed better, and are more courteouſly intreated, more juſtly dealt with, by meere naturall and morall men, and ſuch as are ſtrangers unto God, then by many that are forward and zealous profeſſours of religion. The daies wherein we live, have furniſhed us with many experiments, and obſervations in this kinde. How many meer naturall and morall men, ſcarce pretending ſo much as to a form in religion, have been ſhadows to the Saints, whilſt many Grandees in profeſſion, have been a ſcorching heat? with how much more righteouſneſſe and equity, hath their cauſe been judged by meer ſtrangers, then by thoſe who pretend highly to the ſame *houſhold of Faith* with them? How hath the wiſdome of the *children of light*, been *juſtified*, by the ingenuity of the ſons of nature, whilſt it hath been

Act.25.24.25
Act.28.17,18, 19

been condemned by the ſuperſtitious partiality of thoſe, who call themſelves a *generation of the righteous:* Thus did *Feſtus* an heathen and Idolater, juſtify *Paul*, profeſſing that *he had found nothing worthy of death that he had committed*, when as all the *multitude of the Jews*, zealous profeſſours of the worſhip of the ſame God with them, *cried* out, that he ought not to live any longer; yea the *High Prieſt* himſelf, and *the chief* of this devout nation, *thought they did God ſervice*, in ſeeking to take away his life, though in a treacherous way. [a] Thus likewiſe *that Juſt* one himſelf, was pronounced *Juſt*, [b] by *Pilate*, an heathen Judg (and by his wife alſo [c]) and clearly acquitted from all manner of *blame touching thoſe things, whereof he was accuſed*; [d] yea this *Pilate* had *determined*, [e] and laboured it accordingly, [f] to diſcharge and ſet him free; whenas the *chief Prieſts*, who were looked upon both by themſelves, and others, as the chiefe pillars of religion, and the true worſhip of God in thoſe days, together with the rulers, and great bulk of that zeale-profeſſing people; both falſly and furiouſly accuſed him; [g] charged him with blaſphemy, [h] with *perverting the nation*, [i] with *forbidding to give tribute unto Cæſar*, [k] and were ſo exceeding mad in their hatred againſt him, that nothing could reſtore them to their wits and ſenſes, but only a ſacrifice made of his life upon the ſervice thereof. *Muſculus* expounding thoſe words in *Iſaiah* 8.12. *neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid*, obſervs, that *the Prophet and the godly people with him, were in greater danger of the reprobate and ſtifnecked Church of Judah, then either of the Syrians*, or *Aſſyrians*; yea and makes this generall obſervation, that *it is the lot and condition of perſons truly godly, who live and converſe amongſt a ſtubborn, wicked, and rebellious people, claiming Church-ſhip and relation unto God, not only to be in danger of receiving miſchief, from the profeſſed enemies of God, but from thoſe alſo, who make profeſſion of the ſame religion with them; who are wont with farre more bitterneſſe and violence to proſecute the godly, who diſſent from their courſes and ways, then thoſe who profeſſedly are the enemies both of God, and his people* [l].

a Act 25.3.
b Mat.27.24. cv.1.
d Luk. 23.14
e Act.3.13.
f Luk.23.14.15 16.20 22. &c
g Luk 23.18.
h Mat.26.65.
i Luk.23.2.
k idem.

l *Quin ſi ſortè pioram, qui in populo Dei rebelli & contumaci impio & incredulo verſantur probè conſideres, ſic eſt illa comparata, ut non modo periculum ſit à profeſſis populi Dei hoſtibus, ſed & ab ipſo populo ejuſdem religionis conſorte, qui multo acerbius inſectatur pios, à ſtudijs ſuis abhorrentes, quam qui ex profeſſo ſunt Dei ac populi ſui hoſtes. Quare non minus, imò plus periculi erat Prophetæ, & reliquis piji, quos hic Dominus alloquitur, à reprobâ & contumaci Eccleſia Iehudæ, quam a Syris, vel Aſſyrijs.*

The

The Third and laſt generall head, of things mentioned, wherein the working or diſpoſing Providence of God, in the affairs and occurrences of the world, anſwereth the pattern of the Scriptures, is of things that are ſpirituall, or of a ſpirituall conſideration. This correſpondency or agreement we ſhall take notice of in five particulars.

1. In the variety or ſeverall kinds of means, by which men and women ordinarily are brought home unto God, and built up in the knowledge of God. 2. In the property or quality of theſe means. 3. in the manner or terms, upon which men are brought home unto God, and ſavingly converted unto the faith. 4. in the different conditions, diſpoſitions, practiſes, of thoſe, who are brought home unto God, before this bleſſed motion is fouud in them. 5. (and laſtly) in the different growths or ſtatures, as well in knowledge, as in grace, of thoſe that are brought home unto God, after their coming into this eſtate.

1. For the ſeverall kinds or variety of means, by which men are ordinarily brought home unto God, the Scripture runs much upon three; firſt, judgements or afflictions: ſecondly, the excellent carriages and deportments of the Saints in their waies: thirdly, (and laſtly) the miniſtry of the Goſpel.

For the firſt, the Scripture ſpeaks much of afflictions, as of a kinde of ordinance ſanctified by God, for the reducement of men unto themſelves, and conſequently unto himſelf. Even as *Solomon* ſpeaks of the *rod* (in the letter, or properly ſo called) as if it were appointed by God to drive out that childiſh folly or untowardneſſe which is *bound up in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction ſhall drive it far from him*; In like manner, there is a kinde of folly, appropriate unto men; (you may call it ſpirituall folly,) a remiſſneſſe and negligence of ſoule, to look after the great things of their peace: which the Scripture repreſents as frequently cured, or driven out of men, by the hand of afflictions. Thus *Elihu* in *Job*, *And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction, then he ſheweththeir work, and their tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded, he openeth alſo their ear unto diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* ——So the rod of extream

Pro 22.15.

Job.36.8,9, 10.

Luk. 15. Isa. 26. 9.

tream misery and shame, drove away that abundance of folly which was bound in the *Prodigalls* heart before, far from him, and brought him home *to his fathers house*. And that of *Isaiah* is of the same importance, *When thy judgements are in the Earth, the inhabitants of the World will learn righteousnesse (with many the like.)* If we looke into the world amongst the Saints, and the congregations of the righteous, there are many of them will tell you, how they were driven in to their spirituall refuge or shelter, by some temporall storm; not that tribulations or afflictions, have by, or of, themselves, brought any man home unto God, but they have awakened many to enquire after, to attend, and intermeddle with that wisdome, by which they have been brought unto God. As though a lye in the nature of it, be most contrary to Gods glory, yet he can overrule it, and *through his truth* make it *to abound to his glory*; so though sickneſse and weakneſse, and poverty, and disgrace, and imprisonment, *&c.* be contrary to the peace and comforts of men; yet God who sometimes caused the sun to turn head upon its own proper motion, and *to goe backward*, can, and many times doth, alter the course and tendency of afflictions, which is to make men miserable, and to curse them; but he makes them *to blesse them altogether*.

Rom. 3. 7.

2. The Scriptures speaks much of the worthy and excellent deportment of the Saints, as having great authority and power to work, and that saving-wise, upon the hearts and consciences of naturall men: and to perswade and prevail with them, to the imbracing of that truth, which will both sanctifie and save them. *Let your light* (saith our Saviour to his disciples) *so shine before men* i. (let your conversation in all parts of it, be so pregnantly and convincingly excellent and holy) *that they may see your good works, and glorifie your father that is in heaven. i.* that beholding and considering the worth and heavenly import of your actions and course, they may be so taken and overcome therewith, as to turn Proselytes to heaven, and so have a rich and happy occasion ministred unto them, of magnifiing God for such a mercy. The Apostle *Peter* attributes no lesse to the royall walkings of Christians. *And have your conversation honest among the Gentiles*, that *they which speak*

Mat. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 12. 3. 1, 2.

evill

*evill of you as evill doers, may by your good Works which they shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation*; cleerly implying, that the lives and waies of the Saints may be raised to that height and pitch of excellency and of glory, that the prophaneſſe, ignorance, and unbelieſe of men will be aſtonied at them; yea and thoſe, who ſometimes were the firſt-born enemies of theſe very men, be ſo far transformed in their mindes and ſpirits, as to bleſſe and glorifie God on their behalf, as having lavingly touch'd their hearts and conſciences with the finger of their holy and heavenly converſations. So again cap. 3. 1. (of the ſame epiſtle) he ſuppoſeth that ſuch huſbands, *Who obey not* (and ſo, either cannot, or will not be won by) *the word, may yet, without the Word, be won by the converſation of the Wives, whilſt they behold their chaſt, or pure, converſation, coupled with fear.*

I believe if inquiry were made throughout the houſhold of faith in the ſeverall ſocieties of the Saints, up and down the world, there will many be found, who will confeſſe and acknowledge, that the godly, righteous, and ſober converſation of the Saints, have been benefactours to them in their ſpirituall affairs, and contributed richly towards their believing. Though I confeſſe that it is not like that this kinde of means, ſhould have bleſſed the world in theſe our daies, at any ſuch rate, as it did in the primitive times, or as it well might doe at any time; becauſe there is not, there hath not been, ſo much of God in the lives and waies of the Saints amongſt us, as was in the daies of the Apoſtles; Profeſſours of religion, in theſe daies, are creſt-fallen (as it were,) and ſunk many degrees lower and nearer to the Earth in their ſpirits, principles, actions, and deportments, in compariſon of what they were heretofore: there is too much of themſelves, and too little of God in their waies, to do any great things in the world in that kinde we ſpeak of. The *Genius* of Chriſtians and true beleevers in *Pauls* daies, was like that of *Paul* himſelf, *viz. to forget the things that were behind, and to preſſe hard, [or endeavour themſelves] unto that which was before*; whereas now ſuch a ſpirit of unworthineſſe generally rules among profeſſours of religion, which perſwades them to remember *the things that are behinde,* Phil. 3. 13.

*behinde*, viz. that they have truly beleeved, that they are in an eſtate of grace and ſalvation, that ſo they may have a pretence, not to endeavour themſelves *towards that which is before*; i. (as the Apoſtle had expreſſed it *verſ.* 11.) towards *the attaining of the reſurrection of the dead*; meaning (the which elſewhere he calls) perfection. For when Chriſtians are excellent, and full of God, in their lives and ways, they live as it were in the ſtate of *the reſurrection of the dead*; wherein men are no wayes ſway'd or acted by the cares, or luſts, or fears of this preſent world, or by any unworthy diſpoſitions, or diſtempers of their natures; but live (as our Saviour ſaith) *like the Angells of God*. If beleevers would *ſow more liberally unto the ſpirit*, would put more coſt, more of that precious ingredient, *the reſurrection of the dead, into their lives*, the ſtrength of their influence upon the world, (I mean upon the ſoules and conſciences of men yet naturall) would be doubled and trebled; and many more, in an ordinary way of Providence, would be wrought upon, and won to the Faith of *Chriſt* by them, then now are. But this by the way.

3. (And laſtly, for this) The moſt common and effectuall means of all the reſt, which the Scriptures preſent unto us, as anointed and ſealed by God for the gathering in of *Chriſts ſheep, into his fold*, from their goings aſtray in the world, I mean, for the effectuall converſion of ſoules unto God, is the miniſtry of the Goſpel, *the ſpreading abroad of the ſweet ſavour of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt* amongſt men. We know the Scripture ſpeaks much to this point: we ſhall not need to multiply places. *Peter* by caſting the *net* we ſpeak of, (the Goſpel,) out of the right ſide of the ſhip, *incloſed a multitude* of men fiſhes (as *Chriſt* had told him that he would make him a *fiſher of men*) even three thouſand ſouls at once. So *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Take heed to thy ſelf, and to thy doctrine; continue in them: for by doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee.* So that the miniſtry and preaching of the Goſpel, is the great ſtanding ordinance of heaven for the tranſlating of men and women from death to life: for the conveying and carrying them over that great lake or gulf, which lieth between an eſtate of ſin and unbeliefe on

1 Tim. 4, 16. Eph. 4 11, 12, 13. Acts 2. 41.

the

the one hand, and a condition of peace and blesſedneſſe, on the other; Therefore they who deſpiſe, or neglect it, are as great enemies to themſelves and their own ſalvation, as thoſe Phariſees and Lawyers were, who rejected the counſell of God againſt themſelves, in refuſing to be baptized by *John*, Luk. 7. 30. It were eaſie to make the pile of teſtimonies, greater in this kinde: but a firſt fruits in ſuch a caſe as this, is better then an harveſt.

Now we all generally know, and cannot but confeſſe, that ſuch as the Scriptures are in this behalf, ſuch are the actings and workings and diſpenſations of the providence of God in the world. Go through the Churches of the Saints, ask of the ſons and daughters of God in all their quarters, how and by what means, they came to be *partakers of the divine nature*, which is in them: doubtleſſe they will generally anſwer you as with one mouth, that it was by that *immortall ſeed of the word of God*, ſown in their hearts, by ſome that went out from him to ſow it. There is not one amongſt many, but will give this account of their tranſlation *from death unto life, from the power of Sathan*, unto the kiugdome of God.

2. The Scriptures hold forth the active and working providence of God (in reference to things of a ſpirituall importance) as conſiderable in the property, or quality of the means, by which ordinarily men are ſavingly wrought upon, and brought home unto God. And that quality or property in the means we ſpeak of, which the Scripture principally eyes, as rendering all the ſeverall kindes of theſe means, that were mentioned, the more effectuall and proper for their ends (the bringing in of ſouls unto God) is an abundance of God in them; and as little of the creature as may be. Afflictions, the more they have of God in them; and to the lives of the Saints, the more they have of God in them; and eſpecially the miniſtery of the Goſpel, the more it hath of God in it; all theſe means (I ſay) of bringing men home unto God, the more they have of God in them, are ſo much the more effectuall, and likely to proſper in their way. Firſt, thoſe afflictions have moſt of God in them, firſt, which are more extraordinary and rare, and that either in reſpect of the nature, and kinde of

them, or of the degree of them, or of the ſecond means producing them: ſecondly which have the moſt manifeſt ſympathy and agreement, or ſutableneſſe with ſuch ſins, one or more, in our lives, for which we have been moſt reproved; either by our own conſciences, or otherwiſe, and notwithſtanding have not forſaken them. Thirdly, which ſtrike us (as it were) in the maſter-veyn of our pleaſures and contentments in the world, when the firſt-born of all our enjoyments and contentments on earth, are as it were ſingled out from all the reſt, and ſlain, or elſe ſorely ſmitten, by the hand of God, in the affliction. Fourthly (and laſtly) which touch and ſmite the conſcience, without any outward breach made upon men. Such afflictions which have the greateſt proportion, of one or more, or all of theſe properties in them, are the moſt like of all others to be operative upon men in a way of ſalvation. If you firſt ſearch the Scriptures, and the world, you will finde the one anſwering the other in the truth of theſe things. Thoſe troubles or afflictions which the Scriptures mention and record, as having wrought occaſionally upon men towards their converſion unto God, you will cleerly finde to have had one or more, of thoſe ingredients in them which have been deſcribed, and that in ſome conſiderable degree. We need not ſtand to examine particular inſtances. That ſmiting to the earth, which prepared the Apoſtle *Paul* to hearken the more attentively to the voice that ſpake to him from heaven, had much of God in it, in regard of the ſtrangeneſſe and extraordinarineſſe of it, as alſo of the means producing it, ſo the fear and aſtoniſhment in the *Jaylor* which had a ſaving tendency in it, by cauſing him to hearken to *Pauls* preaching of the Goſpel, had much of God in it too, in regard of the means producing it, which was the flying *open of all the priſon doors*, and the *looſing of the priſoners bands*, by means of a great earthquake, (or at leaſt in conjunction with this *earthquake*,) I forbear any more inſtances.

I make no queſtion but ſome of you that are preſent, can parallell the Scriptures in this point, at leaſt ſo far, as to confeſſe, that amongſt thoſe afflictions, which have befallen you, in the courſe of your mortall pilgrimage, thoſe which have had moſt

moſt of God in them, in ſome or other of the conſiderations mentioned, have been moſt operative and effectuall upon you, to perſwade you to ſeek after God. So again,

2. The Scripture preſenteth ſuch wayes and practiſes of the Saints, which have moſt of God in them, as of the moſt efficacious tendency to prevail with others (at leaſt ſuch as are capable of them) to enquire after God, to engage the world to look after the things of eternity. Now ſuch ways and practiſes of men have (in the generall) moſt of God in them, which moſt excell the common and ordinary waies and practiſes of men in goodneſſe, or which have the richeſt ſtrain of ſome ſuch excellency, which is very rarely, if at all, to be found in any degree, in the waies or practiſes of the men of this world. And that ſuch waies as theſe are of the richeſt tendency, to take the hearts and conſciences of naturall and worldly men, and to awaken them to look after the things of their peace, is ſufficiently intimated in the Scriptures. *But I ſay unto you* (ſaith Chriſt) *love your enemies, bleſſe them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpightfully uſe you, and perſecute you; that ye may be* (*i.* appear, approve your ſelves to be) *the children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evill and on the good: and ſendeth rain on the juſt and the unjuſt: for if you love them which love you, what reward have you?* (*i.* what ſpirituall ſervice do you unto men, for which God ſhould reward you?) *Doe not even the Publicanes the ſame? And if you ſalute your Brethren only, what doe you more then others, do not even the Publicans ſo?* The whole carriage of the place is clearly of this importance, that an uniform and conſtant tenour of ſuch actions and deportments, which in lovelineſſe and honour tranſcends the line of the common civilities and courteſies of the world, hath an excellent and potent tendency to bleſſe the world, by occaſioning or cauſing men to conceive honourable and worthy thoughts concerning God, his people and waies: Thoſe paſſages of Scripture alſo formerly cited in this argument (and in part explained) Mat.5.16. 1 Pet.2.12. 1 Pet.3.1,2. ſhine with a clear light of the ſame truth.

And.

And if we had the opportunity to converſe freely with the hearts and conſciences of men, we ſhould meet with many exemplifications of the Scriptures in this particular. For (doubtleſſe) there are few, if any, ſavingly converted, and brought home unto God, whoſe converſion hath not received, either riſe or progreſſe, or both, from the vertuous and holy converſations, of thoſe who *were in Chriſt before* them: nor is there any of theſe, if they pleaſe to recollect themſelves a little about the point, but will be able to acknowledge and ſay, that the neerer they ſaw Saints walking to the Heavens, the more the work of their converſion was advanced by them.

3. (And laſtly) For the miniſtery of the word and Goſpel, the Scripture is yet more cleer in this: *viz.* that ſuch a miniſtery, which hath moſt of God in it, is moſt effectuall, and for the moſt part, moſt fruitfull, either in bringing in ſoulsunto God, or in building up ſouls in God. Now that miniſtery hath moſt of God in it, which hath moſt of Chriſt in it, with the leaſt mixture of the wiſedom and weakneſſe of the fleſh: *i.* which 1. maketh the cleereſt and richeſt diſcoveries of God in Chriſt, *i.* of the minde and counſel of God concerning the ſalvation of men by Chriſt: and 2. which gives the cleereſt teſtimonies, that there is a reality and truth in thoſe things, which it thus diſcovers, without entermingling any thing, which is apt, or likely, to diſable this teſtimony in the hearts and conſciences of men. I adde this laſt clauſe, *without intermixing any thing, &c.* becauſe, though men doe make rich diſcoveries of Chriſt, yea and doe argue and prove with ſome good authority and power, the reality and truth of what they diſcover in this kinde; yet if they mingle any thing of the fleſh herewith, if they attempt to bow, ſway or carry any paſſages of the Goſpel, to make them to comply with any worldly end, as to gain, or hold the favour of men, to gratifie the fleſh in any the luſts or undue deſires thereof, to protect any unſound or weak opinion, becauſe a man ſtands already declared for it, or the like; any of theſe things will proportionably incumber and diſadvantage their work, and take away from the weight and worth, of what they ſhall teach otherwiſe, eſpecially in the judgements and conſciences of ſome men. *To the one* (ſaith

2 Cor. 2, 16, 17

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the Apoſtle) *We are the ſavour of death, unto death: and to the other the ſavour of life, unto life, (and who is ſufficient for theſe things?) For we are not, as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of ſincerity, but as of God, in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt:* cleerly implying, that look in what degree any man *corrupts the word of God,* in the miniſtery of it (*i.* embaſeth it with any mixture whatſoever for the accommodation of the fleſh) the leſſe ſincere, or mindfull he is of the inſpection of God over him, whileſt he preacheth, he renders the Goſpel ſo much the leſſe powerfull and affectionate in his diſpenſation of it, either for the conviction, or converſion of men: he cauſeth it to give forth ſo much the weaker and fainter ſmell, or *ſavour,* either of death and condemnation to the wicked nd impenitent, or of life and peace, to the righteous and beleever. When the Goſpel is preached *ſincerely*, and as it comes *from God,* it caſts forth a ſtrong ſent, and fills the noſtrills of the ſouls and conſciences of thoſe that believe and ſubmit unto it, with a moſt odoriferous and pleaſant ſavour of life, peace, and joy, in the love and favour of God: as on the other hand it ſends forth a ſtrong ſent or ſmell of the fire and brimſtone of hell, and of the eternall vengeance of a moſt dreadfull God, into the noſtrills of all that are ungodly and diſobedient. And in what degree the ſpirit of it ſhall be at any time ſtifled, clogged or allayed, by any carnall ingredient, it looſeth proportionably of the ſtrength and vigour of either of theſe operations.

3. Concerning the manner, or terms, upon which men and women are ſaviugly brought home to God, the Scriptures repreſent the caſe under this difference: *viz.* that ſome *paſſe from death to life*, after ſome ſuch manner, as *Peter* informs us that *the Heavens ſhall paſſe away in the great day of the Lord,* ῥοιζηδὸν, *With a great noiſe*; I mean, with great perplexity tumults, conſternation, and aſtoniſhment of ſoule, precedaneouſly uſhering in, and ſometimes, for a while attending upon, this bleſſed change. Others again, without ſo much as the minde in the leaſt diſquieted, or a thought troubled. After the former manner, thoſe converts of *Peter*, Act. 2. 37. and *Pauls Jaylor*: Act. 16. 27. yea and *Paul* himſelf, Act. 9. 4. 6. were

brought into the houſhold of faith, God make a preface to the work of their converſion, in thunder. After the latter, *Matthew* Mat.9.9,10. *Simon Peter*, and *Andrew*, his Brother, Mat.4.18,19,20. and ſo *Philip*, Joh.1.43. and *Nathaneell*, verſ.45,46. *&c.* and *Lydia*, Act.16.14. (to omit others) were taken in to the Ark of life and peace; God came to the hearts of theſe in a ſtill voice, and this without the harbingery either of whirlwind, earthquake or fire. If there were perfect records, kept and ſearcht into, of the manner, how, and the terms, upon which, the preſent generation of the Saints, in all the reſpective members of it, came into the eſtate of grace, *wherein they ſtand*; there is little queſtion to be made, but the one part of them would be found to have come after the one manner ſpecified; and another, according to the other. God ſhakes the foundations of the hearts of ſome, and makes all that is within them to quake and tremble, when he is about to remove them: others he removes with ſo gentle and ſoft an hand, that it cannot be perceived, that ſo much as the leaſt hair of their head is ſhaken in the tranſlation.

4. Concerning the different diſpoſitions and practices of perſons, before their reconciliation unto God; the Scripture preſenteth ſome, vile and abhominable above meaſure, in both: Others without any notorious blot or foulneſſe in either: ſome very conſcientious in wayes and practices, of a grievous provocation in the ſight of God; others without all ſenſe or regard of God in their impieties. The Prodigall in the parable, (Luk. 15.13,18.) the repentant Malefactour upon the croſſe, *Mary Magdalene*, ſeverall amongſt the converted *Corinths*, (1 Cor. 6.9,10,11. beſides many others) are of the firſt preſentment. Of the ſecond, *Matthew*, *Andrew*, *Peter*, and generally the Apoſtles, together with *Mary*, the mother of *Chriſt*, *Nicodemus*, *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, the Eunuch baptized by *Philip*, *Lydia*, &c. Concerning whom, we hear of nothing memorable in any way, or practiſe of ſin, before their turning unto righteouſneſſe. Of the third, the Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf is an inſtance, in ſtead of a thouſand; who before his bleſſed Apoſtacy, from *Saul* unto God, *thought verily that he ought to do many things againſt the name of Jeſus of Nazareth: and*

did

*did accordingly, ſhutting up many of the Saints in priſon, puniſhing them throughout all the Synagogues, compelling them to blaſpheme, and perſecuting them, even to ſtrange cities*[a]. [a] Act. 26. 10, 11.

Of the fourth and laſt repreſentation, are the *Epheſians, who were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, wherein in times paſt* (*i.* before their converſion to the truth) *they walked according to the courſe of this world, after the Prince that ruleth in the aire, the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience*[b]; *being without Chriſt, and without God* (*i.* without either the ſenſe, or knowledge, either of *Chriſt* or of God) *in the world*[c]. And doubtleſſe there are in theſe our days, and have been in thoſe paſt, perſons both men and women, under all theſe reſpective characters, baptized into the ſpirit of faith, and holineſſe by the Goſpel. The draw-net of the Goſpel, at this day gathereth *fiſhes*, of *all* theſe ſeverall *kindes*, and makes them good, and fitting to be gathered into *veſſells*. A little obſervation of, and inquiry after, the manner of the lives and principles of thoſe before their new birth, who are from time to time *begotten of the immortall ſeed of the word*, will abundantly ſatisfie, in this; that the tenour of Goſpel delineation, and of Providentiall acting in that behalf, do anſwer one the other, as *face anſwereth face in the water*.

5. (And laſtly) for the different growths, and ſtatures, as well in knowledge, as in grace, of perſons raiſed from the dead (in ſin and unbeliefe) by the Goſpel, ſuch as the Scriptures repreſent them, ſuch doth the daily experience of the world exhibite them alſo. If the Churches of Chriſt, were diligently ſurveyed, here will be found ſpirituall diſproportions and inequalities, anſwerable to thoſe in civill States and Common-wealths; *high and low, rich and poor, one with another*, ſome ſitting upon the throne and reigning, others lying in the duſt, and complaining: ſome, cloathed with ſcarlet, others with rags; ſome, *eating the fat, and drinking the ſweet of the Goſpel*; others, only *dipping their morſells in* the *vinegar* thereof; and ſome again *fed with food convenient*. They who travail the Scriptures meet with *babes in Chriſt*, in one place, and with ſtrong men, in another, with carnall beleevers in

one place, with ſpirituall in another, with men enriched by *Chriſt with all utterance, and with all knowledge in one place*; with perſons dull of hearing, *allwaies learning*, and *never able to come to* any clear *knowledge of the truth*, in another. Here are of the race of *Oligopiſts*, or little-faith'd Chriſtians; and here are alſo of the generation of the *Plerophoriſts*, whoſe faith laughs *heights*, *depths*, *life* and *death*, *things preſent and things to come*, yea, *every creature in the face to ſcorn*. And who knoweth not but the houſhold of faith, at this day conſiſts of all theſe conſtitutions, tempers, and conditions of men?.

Having thus opened and confirmed the conſideration, or argument in hand, as to the truth of it; Let us (in one word) conſider the efficacy, and weight of the relation of it to our purpoſe, and whether it doth not mightily evince and prove the Scriptures to be from God. When our Saviour asked *Philip, whence ſhall we buy bread, that theſe may eat?* the Evangeliſt ads, that *this he ſaid to prove him, for he himſelf knew what he would do*. If our Saviour ſome time before the working of the miracle (the feeding of five thouſand with the 5 barly loaves, and two ſmall fiſhes) ſhould have told his diſciples, or any other, that there would ſuch a number of men as five thouſand repair ſhortly to him; and that they ſhould *ſit down upon the graſſe*, and be all entertained, and fully fed, with no more, no other proviſion, but only of five *barly loaves, and two fiſhes* (which it ſeems by the Evangeliſt he could eaſily have done, *knowing* what he meant, and withall what he was able, to do) would not thoſe perſons, whoever they had been, to whom he ſhould have ſignified this before hand, have abſolutely concluded, when they had ſeen the thing done, the miracle wrought accordingly, that he himſelf was the worker of it, or at leaſt had his information and knowledge of the thing, before it was done, from him, who was the doer or worker of it? In like manner, when we ſee ſuch a modell or map of the Government of the world, as is preſented and held forth in the Scriptures, made long agoe, which anſwereth in all points thoſe diſpoſitions, diſpenſations, and events of things, which are obſerved and found daily in the courſe of providence,

and

and the government of the world, how can we but infer and conclude that certainly he that could describe the manner of the government of the world, in regard of such a variety of contingent and casuall events, as come to passe from time to time, so long since and before their coming to passe, either is the governour of the world himself, or at least received his instructions from him, who is the governour of the world, how to write? either of which is sufficient to evince the originall of the Scriptures to be from God. It is true, men out of long observation, and experience either of their own, or other mens improvements by contemplation, and a rationall inquiry and search into the reasons and causes of things, may describe and set down long before many naturall events, and such particulars relating to the government of the world, which are wont to come to passe in a regular, constant, and unaltered course, and whose causes are necessary; such as the motions of the sun, moon, planets, and other stars, the times of their risings, and fallings, eclipses, and such like; but for such things, such events, which depend upon voluntary or free-working causes, which are wont to act, sometimes one way, sometimes another and have no law of uniformity imposed upon them by God: he that shall draw up such an exact platforme of such actions, and proceedings of these, as that which hath been presented unto you, must needs be the governour of the world himself, or at least have his directions for the work from him (which is of the same importance for our purpose) Never was there any booke or authour heard of, besides the bible and those that *ploughed with this heifer* (I mean, that tooke the substance of what they wrote from hence) who either represented the sufferings of the Saints, and those that should live godly in *Christ Jesus*, from the world, or displaied that great variety that is, and all waies hath been, foundamongst *Christians*, in respect of their spirituall condition, after any such manner, or upon any such terms, as the Scriptures do. It is true, *Juvenal*, *Tacitus*, and some other Heathen Authours, mention some remarkeable ragings of *Neroes* cruelty against the servants of *Christ* in his time; and further intimate a generall *odium* or hatred of men against this generation: but such veyns of relation as these,

found in the bodies of ſuch Authours, do rather add unto, then take from, the divine Authority of the Scriptures; atteſting the truth of what they aſſert in theſe, by aſſerting the truth of ſuch *hypotheſes*, or particular examples, which do abundantly confirm the ſame. But concerning the greateſt part of thoſe things which we called *matters of a ſpirituall conſideration*, and which are things of choiceſt obſervation in the government of the world, there is profound and deep ſilence in all authours and writers whatſoever, thoſe only excepted, who have drawn their waters *out of thoſe wells of ſalvation*, famouſly known amongſt us, by the name of, the Scriptures.

This for this fifth Demonſtration, or argument, of that kinde, we are yet upon, *viz.* ſuch acts or paſſages of Divine providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and from him.

Arg. 6 We mentioned a ſixth particular, under this head (which was the laſt) The tenour of this was, the remarkable judgements that have been executed and inflicted by God, upon thoſe, that have been the chiefeſt enemies of the Scriptures, and of thoſe, who have profeſſed the religion and worſhip of God, commanded and taught in them. We ſhall not inſiſt upon any explication, or traverſe of this argument, becauſe the confirmation of the truth of it depends alltogether upon hiſtory, and may be had in abundance, by peruſing the Eccleſiaſticall records of all ages, partly before, but eſpecially ſince, the days of the coming of *Jeſus Chriſt* in the fleſh, into the world. I make no queſtion but many of you, have read the volume of Church-hiſtory, intituled, *Acts* and *Monuments*, publiſhed many years ſince by Mr *Fox*, in the engliſh tongue. You that have read this hiſtory cannot but know, that God hath broken out of heaven like a lion out of a thicket, from time to time, with great terrour and exemplarineſſe of judgement, both upon particular perſons, and whole ſtates and kiugdomes too, who have magnified themſelves, in the greateſt height of hatred, and enmity, and furiouſneſſe of proceedings, againſt the Scriptures, and the religion contained and commanded therein. And as God threatneth that he would *make Jeruſalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about*, when they

*they ſhould be in ſeige againſt Judah and Jeruſalem*; and again *that he would make Jeruſalem a burdenſome ſtone for all people*: telling them, *that all that burthen themſelves with it, ſhall be cut in peeces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together againſt it*; So hath he done, and is in doing by all States and Kingdomes in the world, that have and do oppoſe the Scriptures or the truth contained in them, or that afflict, oppreſſe, and exerciſe cruelty upon thoſe, who hold forth the truth of them, with greateſt power and advantage unto the world, Thoſe perſons, States, and Kingdomes, who thirſting after the bloud of the Saints, made way by a ſtrong hand of violence, oppreſſion and cruelty, to come at it, and drank of it; found it a *cup of trembling*, and aſtoniſhment unto them: though the taſt of it was very ſweet, and as hony in the mouth, and in the going down, ſo that they thought they had had a ſoveraign cordiall of it, and that which would have bred the beſt bloud that ever ran in their veyns; yet when it got into their bellies, it wrought terribly, it made them caſt up all the ſweet morſells of the pleaſures and contentments of this world that ever they had devoured, it either brought preſent death, ruine, and deſtruction upon them, or elſe expoſed them to ſhame and miſery in the world. And as ſometimes it comes to paſſe, that he that heaves at a ſtone that is too heavy for him, and ſeeks to take it up, and bear it away upon his ſhoulder, is thrown back and daſht to peeces, by the weight of it; So have many, both perſons, and kingdomes, heavd at the Scriptures, and thoſe that held them forth, attempting the removall both of the one, and of the other, out of the world: whoſe enterprize hath recoild upon them, with ſuch violence, that their bones have been broken, yea they and their kingdomes daſhed in peeces by it. Zach. 12. 2, 3.

If we ſpeak of ſtates and kingdomes, God began that examplarineſſe of judgement we ſpeak of, with *Egypt* (in the letter) and hath done ſomewhat, and will proceed further very ſhortly, yea and will conclude with *Egypt* in the ſpirit (or *Egypt ſpiritually ſo called*) I mean that ſcarlet whore, that mother of abhominations ſpoken of in the Revelation, who *makes her ſelf drunk with the bloud of the Saints*. Concerning

*Egypt*

*Egypt* in the letter, it was foretold by him that put the thing into execution, and did the deed afterwards, four hundred years before it was acted, that he would judge this ſtate and kingdome for their oppoſing and attempting to ſuppreſſe, the truth, or true worſhip of God (now held forth in the Scriptures) in the perſons of thoſe, in whoſe hearts and lives only it was then written. *Know of a ſurety* (ſaith God to *Abraham*) *that thy ſeed ſhall be a ſtranger in a land that is not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them*, and *they ſhall afflict them* four hundred years. *And alſo that nation whom they ſhall ſerve*, (*viz.* in afflictions, oppreſſions, and ſufferings) *will I judge*. *viz.* with moſt exemplary and remarkable judgements indeed, as is to be read at large in *Exodus*. So now the ſame God, having ſtrecht the ſame line of judgement and deſtruction over many other States, nations, and kingdomes by the way, in the ſucceeding generations of the world, hath at this day, *ſpirituall Egypt in chaſe*, that Autichriſtian ſtate, which troubles the Chriſtian world in bloud, who is active by her prophets, agents, and inſtruments *in ſheeps clothing*, and who have his mark, not in their foreheads, where the world might take notice of it, but in their hand, which they ſhut, and ſo keep the mark therein ſecret from the ſight of the generality of men (though the Saints know it to be there by their actings and workings) that antichriſtian ſtate (I ſay) which is active by ſuch agents as theſe, in making war, againſt that remnant of *the ſeed of the woman, who keepe the commandements of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus*, God hath in chaſe, and is in purſuit hereof, with his judgements; and though ſometimes he ſeems to make a default, and to be at a loſſe of his game, yet he will ſoon recover, and follow cloſer then ever, the ſent of the *bloud of his Saints*: yea he will not give over the chaſe till he hath hunted, this great *Nimrod* himſelf, this *mighty hunter* of the Saints, and of the teſtimony of *Jeſus*, into the pit of deſtruction even the *lake that burneth with fire*. Of old he anointed but 3 ſwords, to deſtroy Idolatry and Idolaters, out of *Iſrael*, the ſword of *Jehu*, the ſword of *Hazael*, the ſword of *Eliſha*, and foretold, that he that eſcaped the firſt, ſhould be ſlain by the ſecond, and that he that eſcaped the ſecond,

Gen. 15. 13, 14

ſhould

ſhould be met withall and be ſlain by the third, by which alſo it appears that he gave many of them times of eaſe and reſpit between a ſpace or ſpaces, wherein to repent, before he cut them of; but yet went on, with the courſe of his judgement notwithſtanding, and did by the ſecond and third ſword, make ſhort work (as the Scripture phraſe is) at laſt, with thoſe who did not repent. Bnt to deſtroy that great Idolatry, and Idolatrous ſtate out of the world, he hath conſecrated ſeven *golden vialls, full of his wrath*; and hath appointed ſo many *Angels*, to poure them out one after another, though not preſantly or immediatly one after another, but with ſome competent ſpace of time between, to try the working of them reſpectively, upon that State or generation of men, on whom they are to be poured: and the great quarrel which the glorious God hath with this Idolatrous or antichriſtian State we ſpeak of, for the pleading of which he hath prepared the ſeven vialls *of wrath* mentioned, is their hatred againſt the *teſtimony of Jeſus*, as it is held forth, acted, and contended for by his Saints, and ſervants, that are faithfull unto him, and to his crown and kingdome. For this (by the way) is to be known and conſidered, that though it be fleſh and blood, or the perſons of men and women againſt, or upon whom, the enemies of the truth, or of the Scriptures, utter and expreſſe their bloudy hatred and enmity, and the oppreſſion and murther of the Saints, be mentioned as one of the principall ſins, that arms the right hand of God, with fury and vengeance againſt them, yet it is not ſimply fleſh and blood, or the perſons of men, which they ſo hate and perſecute, but the Scriptures, and that in the truth and holineſſe of them, as being received in, and given out again, in ſoundneſſe and ſincerity of profeſſion, by waies and converſations in ſuch men, ſutable to them. If they could ſeparate the truth, from the men, and take them off from waies and practiſes confederate with it, their hatred and indignation againſt them would ſoon be allayed and ceaſe. And this the Holy Ghoſt himſelf implies, Rec. 12. *ult.* where he ſaith that *the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, which keepe the commandements of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus*

1 Kin. 19.17.

Rev. 15 7.

Rev. 12,17.

*Christ*; clearly implying that all the quarrell the *dragon* had against the *womans seed*, was only this: these were conscientious and faithfull in a practicall observation of the commandements of God, and held forth the truth and purity of the doctrine of Christ, and of the Gospel, by a zealous and unstained profession.

It is true, the *Beast* himself professeth, and that with great vehemency of contestation, that he and his children are they *that keepe the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus*; But what commandments of God are *they, which they keep?* or *what testimony of Jesus* is it, which they have? they keep such of the commandments of God, or rather so much of the commandments of God, as they conceive necessary to cover the nakednesse of their hypocrisie, whilst they carry on an earthly design of secular greatnesse for themselves, under a pretence and colour of advancing the spirituall interests of *Jesus Christ* in the world: but for such of these commandments, which *rise up in their might* (as many of them do) against the horrid impiety of their proceedings, they tread and trample them under their feet, like clay and mire in the streets. And for the testimony of *Jesus*, they have it in ink and paper, in their books: but in the *fleshly tables of their heart*, they have a law of hypocrisie written in defiance of it, and whensoever *Christ in his testimony opposeth them in their interest* (as at every time allmost he doth) they say unto *Christ* in his testimony, as Christ sometimes said unto Sathan in his disciple, *Get thee behind me, for thou art an offence unto mee.*

Now then this is that which I say, (and I speak it as from the mouth of the Lord, both for your comfort, and mine own, and of many others ingaged in the same honourable cause with us) that whatsoever we shall suffer for righteousnesse sake, or for the holding forth any part of *the testimony of Jesus*, unto the world, whether it be unto losse of life, liberty, name, or estate, or in what kinde soever, god will call those to a severe account for it, for whom and by whose means, we shall suffer, as he hath called to account (in part) for our brethren, who have suffered from the same spirit, or generation of men, upon the same

terms,

terms, before us. There have been already, three of the seven vials mentioned, by the consent of all our interpreters (upon the matter) if not four, *poured out* upon that antichristian state, and generation of men, who persecute the Saints: and though God suffers them to take breath a while between *viall* and *viall*, and gives them opportunity, to fall afresh again to their work of persecution, after some discouragement and interruption; yet we may assure our selves, that if they will not give over their occupation in bloud, neither will he give over his of taking vengeance: the rest of the seven angels, whose vials are yet unpoured out, stand in his presence, waiting but for the direction of his eye; which shall be given unto them in due time, and then what the three or four former vials have left of this spirit and power in the world, those that remain will, when they shall be poured out, abolish and destroy utterly. Then shall be fulfilled, that which is written: *They shall not hurt or destroy, in all my holy mountain*, saith the Lord: *sufferings for the testimony of Jesus, shall then be swallowed up into victory.* O persecution where is thy sting? O ye sons of blood, where is your victory? Women that are any thing masculine, in their spirits and courage, though they may have some sorrow as well as others, when their houre comes (as our Saviour speaks) yet if they could be confident, that a man should be born into the world, by their labour and travail, and that they should live to see, and enjoy the comfort of it, they would not be much troubled at any pains they might endure, upon such terms. Isa. 65. 25.

Therfore let us *not forget* the encouragement that speaketh unto us. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*[a]. For if we travail we shall the second time bring forth that *man-child who shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, yea immediately* upon this birth, he will rule them upon other terms of power and glory, then he hath done to this day. As a woman can have no child or son, likely in time to protect her, or to be an honour unto her, unless she first travails and suffers pains in bringing him forth: so neither must the Church of God expect to have Christ present at any time in power and height of protection with her, or to be a glory unto her, in the sight of Joh. 16. 21. [a] Rev. 2. 10.

the world, unleſſe ſhe firſt groans and labours under perſecutions, which are as proper a means to bring him forth upon ſuch terms, as the pains or throws of a woman in travail are, to bring forth the child that is yet in her wombe. But this by the way.

Let us (in a word) weigh the ſtrength of this conſideration alſo, and ſee whether it will not contribute liberally as all the former have done, towards the reliefe of our conſciences, againſt all jealouſies and fears, leaſt the originall and authority of the Scriptures ſhould not prove *divine*. Behold (ſaith God unto his Church and people) *all they that were incenſed againſt thee, ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, they ſhall be as nothing, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh. Thou ſhalt ſeek them, and ſhalt not finde them, even them that contended with thee; they that war againſt thee, ſhall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.* Doth not God, by ſpeaking theſe things to a particular people, or generation of men, and acting accordingly for them, and in their vindication, plainly declare a peculiar relation to them, and that he had *choſen them*, (as he had ſaid a little before) from amongſt *all other people*, and formed them (as he ſaith elſewhere) for a peculiar people to himſelf? and that all other people and nations, for whom he never did, nor intended to doe, any ſuch things as theſe, were but ſtrangers to him, in compariſon? In like manner, God having riſen up in all ages, and from time to time, to plead the cauſe of the Scriptures, and of thoſe who profeſſed the faith, and practiſed the doctrine of them, and that with *great jealouſie* and wrath, againſt ſuch who appeared in enmity and oppoſition, either againſt the one or the other, having done no ſuch thing for any other kinde of writing, or for the lovers or profeſſours of any other kinde of learning, or doctrine whatſoever, againſt their enemies: doth not this plainly demonſtrate and evince, that he owns the one, the Scriptures, as peculiarly his, and formed by himſelf, and that he rejects all the reſt, as touching ſuch a relation. For as the Apoſtle evinceth the excellency of Chriſt above the Angels, as being the ſon of God, by demanding or rather reaſoning thus. But *to which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, ſit at my right hand*, until I make

Iſa. 41. 11, 12.

thine

*thine enemies thy footstoole?* implying, that he had so said unto *Christ*; so may we clearly enough evince and prove, the excellency of the Scriptures, above all other writings and doctrins whatsoever, and their peculiar relation unto God, by such a demand (reason-wise) as this: Did God say unto any other book or doctrine, or to the professours of them, *Lift up your heads*; maintain your authority and interest in the hearts and consciences of men in the world, *untill I make your enemies your footstoole?* Or hath he not said thus (in effect) to the Scriptures and the true professors of their doctrine? hath he not given their enemies from time to time: *as the dust to their sword? and as driven stubble to their bow?* Hath not the world begun to fall before them? and shall it not fall altogether? Thus hath it been done, and thus shall it be done still, to that doctrine, to that religion, with the true professours of it, *which God will honour*: but it neither hath been, nor shall be so done unto any other. And thus we have done with our sixth and last of the first sort of arguments, to evince the divinity of the Scriptures, under the second generall head, which we called, extrinsecall. These arguments were such passages or acts of Providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and as proceeding from him. Heb. 1. 13

The latter kinde of arguments contained under the same generall head, consists of such, partly doings, partly sayings of men, which are so far confederate with those providences of God, as to joyn in testimony with them in the behalf of the Scriptures. We shall be very briefe both in the proposall, and arguing of these, though they be both the one and the other of them, of as large a consideration, as any of the former.

First, There have been, and are daily acted and done by men such things, which cleerly prove the Scriptures to be from God. These again may be divided into two sorts: they are either 1. such actions, by which the predictions or propheticall carriages of the Scriptures (I mean, some of them, and such as eminently considerable) are fulfilled, or else, 2. such by which the doctrinall, or sententious passages of the Scriptures, and these likewise very remarkable, are verified and asserted.

For the former. The actions of men, by which that ſpirit of prophecy, which ſpeaks in them, is juſtified, *i.* by which the things predeclared and foretold by this ſpirit, are accordingly performed and done in the world, doe give teſtimony unto the Scriptures, that they are divinely inſpired, and from God. Thus the act of *Judas* in betraying *Chriſt*, and the Apoſtles flying, thoſe actions of the ſouldiers in crucifying *Chriſt*, and thoſe martiall actions of the *Romans*, by which they conquered *Jeruſalem*, defaced and demoliſhed the temple, not *leaving one ſtone upon another*, all theſe did abundantly demonſtrate the Scriptures to be from God.

The *Chriſtian Worlds wondring after the Beaſt*, ſo long together, the *ten Kings, in giving their Kingdomes unto the Beaſt*, the *Beaſt* in making war with the Saints, with many other actions of men, prophetically foreſhewed in the book of the *Revelation*, do the like. At this day (amongſt our ſelves) they that expreſſe hatred againſt the Saints (godly men) for *Chriſts ſake*, *i.* for that of *Chriſt* which is in them, their godlineſſe or holineſſe; ſo again, they who act as men, that cannot, or will not, endure ſound doctrine (*viz.* ſuch doctrines or truths, though never ſo agreable to the word of God, which croſſe their carnall ends or humours, or temporall deſigns but *after their own luſts will heap up unto themſelves teachers*) *i.* will ſeek out and follow, they care not how many teachers, that will comport with them, and ſtrengthen their hand, in their ſinfull and unworthy waies; they (I ſay) who do ſuch things as theſe, do by ſuch actions, confirm and ſeal the divine originall of the Scriptures, though they intend nothing leſſe. As *Paul* ſometimes ſaid of *the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and their rulers, that becauſe they knew not Chriſt, nor yet the words of the Prophets, which are read every Sabbath day amongſt them, they fulfilled them in condemning them.* Act. 13. 27. So may it be ſaid of many the inhabitants of London, and of their rulers, that becauſe they know not *Jeſus Chriſt*, nor the words *of the prophets* and *Apoſtles*, though they be read yea and preached *unto them every Sabbath day*, yea and oftner too, they fulfill both in condemning *Chriſt*, both in many of his ſervants, aud in many of his Truths; and conſequently by walking

walking contrary to the Scriptures, they assert the Scriptures, and secure their authority from above. So again those amongst us, who having been formerly *sons* and *daughters* of *Belial*, full of all unrighteousnesse, and all manner of abhominations, but have now through the grace of God, so far remembred themselves and the extreame vilenesse and sinfullnesse of their former waies, that they *build* up with both their hands the honour of *Christ*, and of that religion, which before they pulled down, marching in the head of the Saints, and out-running those in the race of holinesse, who had set out long before them; such persons as these also, by such waies and actions as these, do make the crown of divine authority upon the head of the Scriptures to flourish, because they give accomplishment to that remarkable and propheticall saying, that *many that are last shall be first*, as on the other hand, they who having been salt, but are now become unsavoury, *good for nothing but to be thrown upon the dunghill, and trodden and trampled under feet by men*; who were sometimes like shining stars, of the first magnitude in the firmament of religion, but are now fallen to the earth, and move according to the course and motions of this present world, practising enmity and hatred against the Saints, against the ways and truths of God, such as these likewise, even by these waies and works of abhomination, plead the same cause with the former, the royall parentage and descent of the Snriptures from God; inasmuch as they plainly attest and keep from falling to the ground, such a saying of prophecy in them, which otherwise might seem but a dead letter, without any spirit of life and truth in it, and so might pollute or endanger the credit and authority of all the rest; this I mean, That there are *many first, which shall be last*. The truth is, that the Scriptures are so framed and contrived, that let men walk which way they will, let them set their faces, and fall in their practises, either to the East, or to the West, to the North or to the South; let them be righteous, or unrighteous in what degree they please: yea let them set themselves with all their might, and with all their strength to oppose them, yet they shall doe homage unto them: yea their fiercest contestations, and most fierce oppositions against them, shall and will

Mar. 10. 31.

will

will or nill they, turn unto them for a teſtimony, and that of their heavenly originall, and proceeding from God. For this is that which we mentioned.

In the ſecond place; *viz.* that men do not only give teſtimony unto, and aſſert the divine authority of the Scriptures, by acting the propheticalls thereof, but the doctrinalls alſo, *i.* by acting either thoſe graces, thoſe noble principles and perfections on the one hand, or thoſe luſts, and baſe principles and corruptions on the other hand, which the Scriptures declare to be in thoſe two great diviſions of men in the world. As for example, when men live and act out of that noble principle of faith, as if they took all for granted, and moſt unqueſtionably true, which the Scriptuaes report concerning *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the freeneſſe of the grace of God in him, and the great things of the world to come, and hereupon ſhall ſpeak unto the world daily, as the Lord Chriſt ſpake unto *Sathan* (in *Peter*) World, get thee behinde mee, and be no offence unto mee; and ſo to their pride, frowardneſſe, revenge *&c.* in all their waies, and with all their might, plying their heavenly intereſt, *and laying up for themſelves treaſures* without end, there, *where neither ruſt nor moth doth corrupt, nor theeves break through and ſteal.* Men (I ſay) by ſuch actions, and waies as theſe, do give a teſtimony full of power, and authority to the Scriptures, that they are not of humane but of divine inſpiration, and that God himſelf put of his own wiſdome and knowledge unto them. So again when men ſhall act out of thoſe baſe and vile principles, which are diſcovered to be in the hearts and natures of men, only by the Scriptures, as (*verſ.*8.) out of an hatred unto *Jeſus Chriſt* and his Saints, out of a contempt or *neglect of that great ſalvation*, which is brought and tendered, and as it were laid down at their feet, by the Goſpel, and in the very face and preſence of life and mortality on the one hand, and of the vengeance of hell fire on the other hand, ſhall be covetous, unclean, proud, lovers of themſelves, unjuſt, unmerciſull, *&c.* as we know thouſands amongſt us are, ſuch waies and practiſes of men as theſe, will not ſuffer the mindes or thoughts of any conſidering man to have any reſt, but in the acknowledgement, and perfect

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belief of the procedure of the Scriptures from God; becauſe they ſpeak ever and anon of ſuch things as theſe; and preſent them, with the characters and ſtories, or examples of ſuch perſons as theſe; like unto which there are none to be found in all the world, where the Scriptures have not been preached, or known. The pride, covetouſneſſe, uncleanneſſe, hatred, malice, injuſtice, oppreſſion, cruelty, *&c.* which reign in the territories of hell, amongſt perſons, who have not had the opportunity of converſe with the Scriptures, nor ſo much as heard of the gracious propoſalls of the God of glory in theſe unto the world, are ſinnes indeed of the ſame name, and nature (as touching the letter of ſin) with the pride, covetouſneſſe, uncleanneſſe, *&c.* which are acted in the preſence of *the powers of the World to come*, and by perſons, unto whom the great and bleſſed *Inhabiter of Eternity*, expoſeth himſelf in Scripture viſion, to be *ſeen* (as it were) *face to face*; yet as touching matter of ſinfulneſſe, or demeritoriouſneſſe, which is the ſpirit of ſin, and that which is ſo potently operative in it to the everlaſting ruine and deſtruction of the creature, they are ſinnes of a farre more innocent and harmleſſe nature, and import; yea they are ſcarce ſinnes, comparatively. The ſins of heathens are but *graſhoppers*: it is the ſinne of the Chriſtian which makes the *gyant*. As there was no creature could make a devil, but an Angel: ſo neither is there any circumſtance or opportunity that can make a ſinne ſo dreadfull above meaſure, and devouring, as the promiſe of life and immortality before the face of the ſinner in the committing of it. This briefly for this argument. Great ſinners under the Goſpel, rightly interpreted, are notable aſſertours of the Divinity of it.

The latter proof or demonſtration of the Divinity of the Scriptures, of the two laſt mentioned, was the conſideration of ſuch paſſages of ſpeech, or ſayings of men, whether in their writings, or otherwiſe, which reflect the light of that divine authority upon them, which hath been aſſerted hitherto. This argument, ſhould we traverſe it in the full extent and compaſſe of it, would, I conceive, be more prolix, and take up more time, in the explication and proſecution of it, then any, yea I ſuppoſe then all the former have done. But I have promiſed you a

concluſion of the whole, in this ſermon; and therefore for this promiſe ſake, ſhall preſent you only with a firſt-fruits, inſtead of the harveſt, confining my ſelf to a few particulars, amongſt many. Nor ſhall I inſiſt upon, or ſo much as mention, any of thoſe ſayings or paſſages of ſpeech, which fall ever and anon from the lips of men in theſe daies; no nor yet upon any thing found in books or writings either of a modern date, or whoſe authours are ſuſpected as ſuppoſititious and counterfeit, though out of theſe three quivers, there might many arrows be drawn, to ſlay the unbeliefe of men, concerning the divine originall of the Scriptures: but I ſhall only produce ſome ſpeciall teſtimonies out of ſome ancient writers, of the beſt credit and authority within their line and ſphere, yea of far better with with many then the Scriptures themſelves.

Firſt, then (in the generall) this is conſiderable, that though the penmen of the Holy Ghoſt, do *not receive the teſtimony of men*, (as our Saviour himſelf ſpeaks in a like caſe) *i.* doe not need, or ſtand upon *the teſtimony of men*, for the avouching or confirmation of the truth of their writings, but are confident that what they write will gain authority and credence in the judgements and conſciences of men upon other terms, though the teſtimony of men, ſhould fail them; yet God deſiring that men, who do believe them, ſhould beleeve abundantly, *that ſo the heirs of promiſe might have* every waies *ſtrong conſolations*, hath ſo provided that moſt, or all the principall, the moſt ſtrange and wonderfull things recorded in the Scriptures, ſhould be reported alſo and confirmed by Infidels, Pagans, Gentiles, and Heathen writers themſelves, and ſuch who are enemies unto the Scriptures, and to the religion, which is recommended in them unto the world.

This in generall: For particulars, by which the truth of the generall will fully appear, there are ſo many of them taken notice of, and drawn together in the books and writings of Chriſtian authours, who have laboured in this argument, both heretofore, and of later times, that the time would fail us (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in a like caſe) yea and ſtrength too, to rehearſe them all particularly.

Firſt, Concerning the creation of the world by God; this

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is one of the greateſt, and moſt wonderfull things aſſerted in the Scriptures, the ſerious and effectuall beliefe whereof muſt needs make ſuch a breach upon the judgement, reaſon, and underſtanding of a man; that this being once entred and gotten in, other things reported in the Scriptures, will hardly keep out. All the miraculous and wonderfull things of the Scripture beſides, are but as ſparks of that flame of infinite power, which ſhone to the cleer manifeſtation of it ſelf, in the creation of the univerſe. And yet this great and moſt conſiderable piece of Scripture, (the creation of the world by God) how great a concurrence hath it from amongſt the heathens for the confirmation of the truth of it? He that ſhall peruſe, what *Mercurius Triſmegiſtus* (one of the moſt ancient writers amongſt the heathen) hath left in thoſe fragments of his works, which are preſerved, and to be found in other ancient authors, concerning the ſubject we ſpeak of (the creation of the world by God) will be half perſwaded, that he had ſeen *Moſes* text, and meant to write a kinde of comment upon it: *Moſes* ſpeaks of *darkneſſe upon the waters*; this *Triſmegiſtus* repreſents in his commentaries, *a dreadfull ſhadow hovering on the moiſt nature*, as it were *brooded by the word of God*; *Moſes* ſaith, that *God ſpake*, and that forthwith things were made: *Triſmegiſtus* acknowledgeth and bringeth in *Gods word ſhining, whereby he created the light, and made the world, and all that is therein.* And ſo he goeth on, as it were hand in hand with *Moſes*, a great way together, paraphraſing upon his expreſſions. I might here add the teſtimony alſo of *Orpheus*, one of the ancienteſt of the *Greeks*, who (as himſelf reporteth) had been in *Egypt*, where he ſaid he had learned, that there was but one God, *and that the Air, the Heaven, the Sea, the Earth, and Hell with all things in them, had dwelt or harboured in the breſt of this God from eternity* (with many other high and excellent expreſſions of himſelf in this point) It were endleſſe to cite the teſtimonies of all thoſe authours, famous for wiſdome and learning to this day, who plainly taught and avouched the creation of the world, and all things by God; as of *Empedocles*, *Heſiod*, *Parmenides*, *Sophocles*, *Æſchilus*, *Euripides*, *Pythagoras*, *Thales*, *Anaxagoras*, *Plato*, with many others.

Again ſecondly, For the long lives of the firſt patriarchs, and thoſe that are ſtoried in Scripture, to have lived in the firſt age, or ages of the world, as ſome ſeven, others eight, ſome nine hundred hundred years and more (of which, ſome it ſeems, make a grand objection againſt the truth, and conſequently againſt the divinity of the Scriptures) yet diverſe heathen authours confirme the relation of *Moſes* herein: as *Manethon* an *Egyptian* writer, and *Beroſus* a *Chaldean*, *Moſchus*, *Heſtiæus*, and others,, who write the *Phœnician* ſtory. Yea *Heſiod*, *Hecataus*, *Acuſilaus*, *Hellanicus*, and *Ephorus*, conſent unto the relation, affirming moreover, *that they were ordained to live ſo long, that they might ſtudy ſciences, and invent arts; eſpecially that they might diſcover the motions, of the heavens, and inrich the world, with the knowledge of* Aſtronomy; *wherein* (they ſay) *they could have done little good; if they had lived leſſe then ſix hundred years: becauſe the great year* (as they call it) *is ſo long in going about, and coming to a period.*

Concerning *Noahs* flood; what nation (ſaith *du Pleſſis*, a learned Proteſtant writer) hath not beleeved it? and what authour hath not ſpoken of it? Among the *Egyptians*, *Phœnicians*, *Grecks*, and *Romanes*, nothing was more common. And becauſe they had heard, that it had been moſt ancient, and fallen out towards the beginning of the world, being ignorant of the account of the times; therefore every writer aſſigned it to ſuch a time as he thought to be of greateſt antiquity. The *Theban* writers referred it to the time of *Ogyges*: the *Theſſalian*, to the time of *Deucalion*: and proportionably others. And by the reports of travailours, the belief of it is at this day common in *Braſile*, *nova Hiſpania*, *Florida*, &c. who likewiſe affirm, that the inhabitants of theſe countries, doe generally impute it to the ſin of man, and to the wrath of the higheſt, poured out upon mankinde.

Concerning *Noahs* Ark; though the heathens had not the ſtory as perfect as *Moſes* had, who ploughed with a farre better heifer then theirs, and had his knowledge hereof by the revelation of the Spirit of God; yet ſome of them, as *Alexander*, *Polyhiſtor*, and *Abidene* by name (very ancient writers) relate

relate the ſtory in their writings thus; that *Saturne foretold unto* Xyſuthrus *the flood ere it came*; and that *he made him an ark to ſave all cattell with him: that he preſerved his holy writings by ingraving them in certain pillars in Egypt; and ſayl. din his ark towards Armenia; that after certain daies he ſent forth certain birds, which found no dry ground*, &c. Their ſpeaking thus of *Saturne*, anſwers the fabulous notion and conceit of the *Greeks*, who ſuppoſed the Jews to have worſhipped *Saturne*, becauſe they kept holy the ſeventh day. And for the name of *Xyſuthrus*, it may well be that in the *Aſſyrian* language it ſignifies as much as *Noah*; who (as *Joſephus* reports) had divers names, in divers places. Yea and *Plutarch* ſpeaketh expreſly of the dove, which *Deucalion* ſent out of the ark to ſeek dry land.

Concerning the building of the Tower of *Babel*, and the confuſion of tongues, ſome of the foreſaid authours write thus. *The common opinion is* (ſay they) *that men being bred of the earth, and truſting in their own ſtrength, would needs in ſpite of the Gods, goe rear a tower up to the Sun, in the ſame place where* Babylon *now is: and that when they had raiſed it very high, the Gods overthrew it, and caſt it down upon their heads with a great winde; and that at this time began the diverſity of languages: whereupon the Hebrews called the place*, Babel.

It were eaſie (as before was intimated) to make this pile farre greater, and to fetch in credit and authority in abundance from forreign authours, ſuch as they afford, to ſtrengthen and inrich all other the relations of Scripture, with reputation of truth; and particularly thoſe which ſeem moſt obnoxious. But this having been ſo copiouſly, and with ſo much faithfullneſſe performed to my hand, by the forementioned worthy and learned authour, *du Pleſſis*, in his book, *De veritate Religionis*, i. *of the trueneſſe of Religion*, not onely extant, but of eaſie procurement alſo in the Engliſh tongue: I am willing to diſcharge my ſelf from any further ingagement in the argument in hand, upon his account: only tranſcribing that famous record of *Joſephus* concerning him, who is the grand theme and ſubject of the Scriptures, and whom they *count it no robbery to make equall with God.*

*In the time of* Tiberius *there was one Jesus, a wise man (at least if he was to be called a man) who was a worker of great miracles, and a teacher of such who love the truth, and had many, as well Jews as Gentiles who clave unto him. This was* Christ. *And when Pilate, upon his being accused, by the chiefe men of our nation, had sentenced him to be crucified, yet did not they who had first loved him, forsake him. For he appeared unto them the third day alive again; according to what the Prophets, divinely inspired, had foretold concerning him, as they had done an innumerable number of very strange things besides. And even to this day, both the name and kinde of persons, called Christians, so named from him, remain.* This *Josephus* was a Jew, as well in religion, as by nation: though he wrote in Greek. He was born about five or six years after the sufferings of Christ, and wrote the history, where the record mentioned is found, about twenty years after the destruction of the city and temple of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*.

For a conclusion: As the Evangelist *John* saith, that *truly Jesus did many other miracles in the presence of his disciples, which were not written in his book: but those he did write, were written, that men might beleeve that Jesus is the Christ the Sonne of God, and that beleeving they might have life through his Name*[a]: implying, that though he recorded not all things, which were subservient to his main end in writing, that he had opportunity to write; yet he wrote what he judged compleatly sufficient for the procurement and obtaining of this his end; So I acknowledge, that there are many other considerations and arguments, besides those held forth and managed in this treatise, strongly assertive of that conclusion and truth, the demonstration whereof is the great prize, that hath been mainly contended for in this long race; but judging these, which have been proposed, argued, or insisted upon, to be abundantly evictive of this important truth, that the Scriptures *are from heaven, and not from men.* I was willing to gratifie both you, and my self, with silence in the rest: And to this determination I was led also by the hand of this consideration, that as (according to our Saviours determination) *they that will not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be per-*

[a] Joh. 20. 30.

*perſwaded though one ſhouldriſe from the dead*[b]: neither is it in any degree likely, that thoſe, whoſe judgements and conſciences will not bow down unto, and acknowledge the Divinity of the Scriptures, at the inſtance and command of all thoſe pregnant and important demonſtrations, by which it hath been aſſerted in this preſent diſcourſe, would yeeld, or be perſwaded to take upon them the yoke of this bleſſed ſubjection, though an *Angel from heaven* ſhould bring it unto them; or though as many books were written in confirmation thereof, as *the Whole World were able to contain*. *Ariſtotle* in ſetting out the work and part of a Rhetorician, aſſerting it to be, ὐ πίθειν, ἀλλὰ τὰ πιθανὰ λέγειν, i. *not to perſwade, but to ſpeak things pertinent and proper to perſwade*; drew with the ſame ſtroke of his penſill an happy character alſo of the proper work of a Miniſter of the Goſpel. To overrule the judgements and conſciences of men in the great things of eternity, appertaineth to him, that *rideth upon the heavens*: they *who dwell in houſes of clay*, quit themſelves to the utmoſt point of their line, by propoſing and preſſing ſuch things upon men, which have a ſufficient potencie of reaſon and argument to perſwade, where there is no barre of wilfull neglect, frowardneſſe, or reſiſtance in the way. *God perſwade Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the tents of Shem*[c].

[b] Luk. 16. 31.

[c] Gen. 9. 27.

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*FINIS.*

Errata.

PAg.1.l.21.after *been*,r.*either*.l.ult.for *and*,r *or*.after *malice*,r *or both* p.3. l 30.for *them*,r.*the words* p 7 l 27,28 these words [*especially if proper also and most precisely corresponding with the terme*] to be incloſed in a parenthesis.p.14. l. 6 dele *the brief heads of*.p 32.l.ult.for *hang*,r.*hang one*. p.38 l. 1.for *answer*,r.*answering* p 51.l 18.for *charge*,r.*charr*. p.54 l 26. for *addition*,r *additions* p.55.l. 2.r.for *consumation*.r.*consummation* p 56 l 15.for *promiſe*,r *primize*.ib for *phœnomena* r.*phænomena*. p.62. l.32. for *Gods*,r *God*. p.63 l.9 for *in them*,r *therein*. p.68.l.30.dele.*be*. p 69.l 6. for *followſhip*. r. *fellowſhip* p 70 l.17.for *him*, r.*them* p.72 l.18.for *meditation*, r. *mediation*. p 74.l 18 for *and*,r. *and this*. ult.for *new*,r.*never* p.75.l.21. theſe words [*as they may by ſtudy and ſtrength of contemplation*] to be in a parentheſis.p. 85.l.5.for *ſhews*,r *ſtrains* p 87 l.20 for *we*,r *men*. p.80.l.1.dele *to* p 93.l.8. for *apprehenſion*,*conſideration*,r *apprehenſions*, *conſiderations* l. 15. for *apprehenſion*,r.*propenſion* p 97.l 18.for *whatſoever*, r *ſoever*. p.98.l. 17. for *conjunction*,r.*communion* p.100 l 17.for *appartaining*, r. *appertaining*. p. 101.l. 32.for *verily*,r *univerſally* p 105.l.11. for *principall*,r *principle*. p.106.l.33. for *honour*,r.*tenour*.p,111.l.10.for *ver* 8 r *for example* p.112,l.9 for *mee*,r. *him*. p.115.l.29.for *to which*,r *with*.p.116.l.27.for *properly*,r.*property*.l 36. del.*and* p.117.l.21.for *work*,r. *women*.for *confor* r. *conſer*.l. ult. for *conjunction*,r.*communion* p.118.l.3.for *coming*,r *couſening* p.119 l 33 for *Scriptures* r.*Scripture*.p.120.l 19 for *work*.r *women* l.21.for *treatiſe*,r.*tranſlation*.l.29. for *ture*.r.*tive* l 30. for *ſpeciall*.r *ſpirituall* p.128 l.29for *deep*.r. *deeper*. p. 159 l.1.for *them*.r.*meh* l.5.for *rule*,r *rules* p.181.l 6.for *uncapableneſſe* r. *unreaſonableneſſe*.p.182.l.36 for *reports*,r *report*. p. 191. l.27. after *make*, r. *it*. p.194 l.7.for *treatiſer*,*treaty*.p.205l.24.for *is*, r *was* .p.l. ult. for *is*, r.*it*. p. 210 l.27.for *diſolved*,r *diſſolved* p,212.l.8. after *Son*,r *of God*. p. 217. l.7. for *motions*,r.*notions*.p.221.l.22.for *intelligility*,r.*intelligibility*,p.237.l.8. for *Generaliſſino*,r.*Generaliſſimo* p.238 l.17, after *as*, r. *on*. p.242.l 6. for *may*,r.*many*.p.246.l.16.for *of* r *on*.p.249.15. for *ſhall*,r *ſhould*. p.256. l. 28. after *he*,r.*had*.p.258 l.13 for *God*,r *Ghoſt*. p. 266.l.10.for *head governour*, r.*heads governours*.p.274.l.34 del *that* p. 275 l.23. for *ſhall*,r *ſhould*. l: 30. after *call*,r *it* p.292.l.26.for *their* r *theſe* l.37 for Κϱιϛῶ,r Χϱιϛῶ. p.298.l. 35.for *or*,r *of* p 304.l.12.after *after*.r.*it*.p. 307.l.20. for *were*,r *are* l. 21. for *themſelves* r.*alſo*.l.31. This parentheſis (*as Joſephus teſtifies*) is to come in l.36.after ſtranger.l.34.after *ſlew*.r *was in a viſible motion towards an accompliſhment* p.316 l.10. for *relogers*, r. *nologers*. p.317. l.36. for *then*, r. p.320.l.7.del *of* p.321 l.19for *power* r.*powers*.p.324.l16.for *mens ſalvation*,r *men*, *ſalvation*,p327 l.13 for *theſe*,r.*their* p.338.l,for *doubt*,r.*doubtleſſe*. p 340.l,13.for *providenc*.r *providence* l,19. for *variaton* r. *variation*.p 341. l.18 for *the till*,r *till the* p.344l.31.after *the*,r.*bloud of the* p 345.l.1.for *matters*,r *matter*.p.346.l.6.for *them*,r *him*.p 355.l.10.for *affectionate*,r *effectuall*.l.14 for *nd*,r.*and*. p.356.l.1.for *make*,r.*making*. p.364. l. 24 for *time*, r. *turn*.l.35.for *for*,r.*from* p.369 ult.for *fierce*,r.*fiery* p. 370 l.13.for *Scriptuaes* r. *Scriptures*.l.29.for *ver*.8.r *for example*.l. 33. for *mortality*,r. *immortality*.

# Texts of Scripture, unto which ſome light is given in the Treatiſe; beſides many other cited occaſionally.

## Genesis 19.5


*This fellow is come alone, as a ſtranger, and ſhall he judge and rule?* pag.268.

Levit.11.44,45. *Ye ſhall therefore be holy: for I am holy*, &c. p.67.

1 King.19.11. *---but the Lord was not in the earth-quake--nor in the wind--nor in the fire.* p.142.

Pſalm.2.3. *Let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us*, &c. p.236.& p.238.& p.284.

19.2. *Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge.* p.44.

19.7,8. *The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever.* p.80.

113.5,6. *Who is like unto the Lord God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himſelf to behold the things in heaven, and on earth?* p.40.212.

119.96. *I have ſeen an end of all perfection: but thy Law is exceeding large.* p.78.

Prov.22.2. *The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.* p.39.

Eccleſ.7.13. *Conſider the work of God: for who can make that ſtrait, which he hath made crooked?* p.38,39.

9.1. *All things come alike unto all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked*, &c. p.337,338,&c.

9.11. *I returned, and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong,* &c. *but time and chance happeneth to them all.* p.339.

Zach.12.2. *Behold, I will make* Jerusalem *a cup of trembling unto all the people round about — and a burthensome stone for all people.* p.361.

Matth.5.29.30. *And if thy right eye offend thee pluck it out — for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.* p.113.

5.44. *But I say unto you, love your enemies: blesse them that curse you,* &c. p.353.

10.37,38. *He that loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me.* p.110.

10.39. *He that looseth his life for my sake shall finde it.* p.110.

11.3. *Goe and shew John again those things, which ye doe hear and see: The blinde receive their sight, and the lame walk,* &c. p.135.

13.5. *Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepnesse of earth.* Ep. to the Reader.

13.9. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* p.34.35.36.

17.12. *---And they have done unto him, even what they list.* p.334.

19.30. *But many that are first, shall be last, and the last, first.* p.335.

Mark 10.38. *But Jesus said unto them, ye know not what ye ask.* p.136.

12.20. *---till he bring forth judgement into victory.* p.269.

Luk.2.34. *---and for a signe that shall be spoken against that*

the

*the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.* p.129.
10.18. *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* p.232.
18.8. *---nevertheleſse when the ſon of man cometh, ſhall he finde faith on earth?* p.334.
Joh.3.6. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh*, &c. p.219.
3.16. *So God loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son*, &c. p.196.
3.20. *He that doth evil hateth the light*, &c. p.283.
6.68. *Lord, to whom ſhall we goe? Thou haſt the words of eternall life.* p. 36.
10.17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again.* p.166.
14.12. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that beleeveth on me, the works that I doe, ſhall he doe alſo; and greater works then theſe ſhall he doe*, &c. p.152.
16.21. *---ye ſhall weep and lament, but the world ſhall rejoyce.* p.346.
Act.2.24. *Whom God hath raiſed up, having looſed the pains of death, becauſe it was not poſſible he ſhould be holden of them.* p.173.
2.37. *And when they heard it, they were pricked in their hearts, and ſaid---men and brethren, what ſhall we doe?* p.139.
13.22. *---a man after mine own heart.* p.155.
14.17. *Nevertheleſſe he left not himſelf without witnes, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven*, &c. p.184,185.
26.8. *Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the dead?* p.137.
26.9. *I verily thought, that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of* Jeſus *of Nazareth*, &c. p.327.

Rom.1.14. *I am a debtour both to the* Grecians, *and to the* Barbarians, *to the wise and to the unwise.* p.108,109.
1.19,20. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest unto them---For the invisible things of him, are manifest from the creation,* &c. p.100. & p.201.
1.21,22. *They became vain in their thoughts---professing themselves wise, they became fools,* &c. p.79,80.
1.24.26. *Therefore also God gave them up to uncleannes, to vile affections,* &c. p.143.
2.4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* p.186.
3.5. *Is God unrigteous? God forbid.* p.180.
3.19. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* p.201.
3.25. *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his bloud,* &c. p.196.
4.11. *---the signe of circumcision, a seal of the righteousnesse of faith.* p.50.
4.25.*---and was raised again for our justification.* p.174.
6.8. *Now if we be dead with Christ, we beleeve that we shall also live with him.* p.189.
6.23. *For the wages of sin is death.* p.180.
7.9. *For I was once alive, without the law; but when the commandement came, sin revived, but I died.* p.121. & p.140.
8.3. *God sent his Son in the similitude of sinfull flesh,* &c. p.214.
8.32. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give*

*us all things?* p.192.
10.2. *For I bear them record, that they have the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.* p.91.
10.19. *But I demand, have they not heard? yes verily their sound went into all the earth,&c.* p. 83,184.
15 1,2,3. *We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves. For even Christ pleased not himself,&c.* p.107,108.
1 Cor.1.24. *We preach Christ, the wisdome of God, and the power of God.* p.171.& p.215.216.
2.13, *Which things we also speak, not in words, which mans wisdome teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spirituall things with spirituall.* p.31.32.
2.16. *The spirituall man judgeth all things: but he himself is judged of no man.* p.131.132.
3.1. *And I (Brethren) could not speak unto you, as unto spirituall, but as unto carnall---.* p.13[illegible].
3.13 *Every mans work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it: because it shall be revealed by fire.* p.44.
6.11. *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justifyed in the name of the Lord Iesus, and by the spirit of our God.* p.149.
9.19. *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made my self servant unto all men.* p.108.109.
9.23. *And this I do for the Gospels sake, that I may be partaker thereof with you.* p.324.
10.20. *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto Devils, and not unto God.* p.89.
10.24. *Let no man seek his own but every man anothers wealth.* p.107.
10.31. *---do all to the glory of God.* p.88.

10.33. *Even as I pleaſe all men for their good, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many; that they may be ſaved.* p.324.

14.24. *But if all prophecy, and there come in one who beleeveth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt,*&c. p.118.119.&127.

15.28. ---*that God may be all in all.* p.69.70.

2.Cor.2.14. *Now thanks be given unto God, who alwaies cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt, and maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge by us in every place.* p.292.

2.15. *For we are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh.* p.175. & p.355.

4.3,4. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes.*&c. p.16.17.& p.216.

4.4. ---*Who is the image of God.*&c. p.220.221.

5.19. *To wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.*&c. p.198.

7.1. *Having therefore theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us clenſe our ſelves from all filthines,*&c.p.70.71.*&c.*

10.4,5. *For the weapons of our warfare, are not carnall, but mighty through God,*&c. p.325.326.

Gal.3.1. *O ye fooliſh* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that ye ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Ieſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth,*&c. p.222.

3.28 *There is neither Iew, nor Greek,* &c. *for ye are all one in Chriſt Ieſus.* p.280.281.

Eph.5.13. *But all things that are reproved, are made manifeſt*

*feſt by the light.* p.120.
Col.1.24. *----and fill up that which is behinde of the affli-ction of Chriſt in my fleſh for his bodies ſake,&c.* p.167.
2.19. *---increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* p.53.
1 Tim.3.16. *And without controverſie great is the myſtery of godlineſſe,* &c. p.84.85.
3.16. *---great is the myſtery of godlineſſe---Chriſt manifeſted in the fleſh.* p.206.
6.3. *--and to the Doctrine which is according to godlineſſe.* p.84.
2 Tim.3.8. *Now as Iannes and Iambres with ſtood Moſes,&c.* p.237.
3.14. *But continue thou in the things which thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them.* p.63.
3.15. *---which is the pillar and ground of truth.* p.243. 244.
4.3. *--but after their own luſts will they heap to themſelves teachers.* p.368.
Tit.1.16. *---but in works they deny him.* p.106.
Heb.2.14. *---that through death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devill.* p.176. 177.
4.12.13. *For the word of God is lively in operation, ſharper,&c. Neither is there any creature, which is not manifeſt in his ſight,&c.* p.125.129.
5.12. *Of whom we have many things to ſay, and hard to be uttered, ſeeing ye are dull of hearing,* p.33.
5.14. *---who by reaſon of uſe have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evill.* p.158.
10.38. *---but if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him,* Epiſt. To the Reader. 11.6.

11.6. --*For he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them, who diligently ſeek him.* p.186.

11.17. *By faith,* Abraham *when he was tried, offered up* Iſaac, *&c.* p.50.

1.Pet.1.18. ---*foraſmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but by the precious bloud of Chriſt,* &c. p.68.69.

2.Pet.1.4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature.* p.71.

1.Joh.3.20. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things.* p.124.

Rev.3.4. ---*theſe ſhall walk with mee in white; for they are worthy.* p.112.

12.7.8. *And the Dragon fought, and his angels:* ---*and prevailed not,* &c. p.341.

12.17. *And the Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, which keep the Commandements of God, and have the teſtimony of* Jeſus Chriſt. p.342.& p.364.

FINIS.